THE CLAIMS OF DECORATIVE ART

WALTER CRANE

IN MEMORIAM

ROBERT HOLMES

R C A

FOR MANY YEARS A TEACHER
IN THIS COLLEGE

THIS BOOK IS ONE OF A NUMBER
FROM THE LIBRARY OF MR HOLMES
PRESENTED TO THE ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF ART BY HIS RELATIVES
JUNE 1930

THE CLAIMS OF DECORATIVE ART

THE CLAIMS

OF

DECORATIVE ART

BY

WALTER CRANE

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN, AND COMPANY
THE RIVERSIDE PRESS, CAMBRIDGE
MDCCCXCII

PREFACE

OF the papers included in this volume some of the shorter ones had their origin in fireside discussions in the studios of brother artists; others have been addressed to larger and various audiences; but all have been written under the influence of that new-old view of art, which has revived during the last quarter of our century, which regards it not only in relation to use and material, and seeks for its vital root in the handicrafts, but also in its connection with common life and social conditions.

Believing that art, looked at rather from the creative side of design, is as essentially a mental and emotional language as poetry and music, while it seeks expression through a variety of processes and materials, and under natural limitations, which limitations, in so far as they are frankly acknowledged, give to art in all its forms a peculiar beauty and charm: believing further that an art which appeals to the eye must be influenced for good or ill by external and social environment, just as a tree takes its character

from certain qualities of soil and climate, it follows that I think it is hardly possible to attach too much importance to these external and social conditions, affecting as they do both art and its producer.

While maintaining the first importance of the arts and crafts of design as contributing to the formation of a fine sense of beauty—a sense which grows by what it feeds on, I have dwelt upon the necessity of harmonious relation in all the arts, and a return to their primal unity in architecture. In this fraternal unity none is before or after the other, none is greater or less than the other.

If I may have succeeded in making out a case for the arts now called Decorative and Applied (though "there is but one art"); if I have made good their claim to consideration in an age given largely to place pictorial and graphic power first; if even any of the following papers induce my readers to follow the clue for themselves, and especially to think out further the relation of art to labour and to social life, whether they reach the same conclusions or not, my book will serve its purpose.

Some few of the papers have been printed in various journals, and I have to thank the editor of the *Art Journal* for permission to reprint "The Claims of Decorative Art."

WALTER CRANE.

Edgewater, Illinois,
January 1892.

CONTENTS

THE CLAIMS OF DECORATIVE ART

AN archbishop at an Academy dinner, doubtless with an amiable desire to administer consolation to those less favoured ones whose works did not adorn the walls around him, is reported to have said, in effect : " Never mind. It is not given to every one to be a Raphael, a Phidias, or a Michael Angelo (the exhibition being, by implication, of course full of them) ; but let them not therefore despair, let them turn their attention to Decorative Art, for there was a large field in which they might yet distinguish themselves."

Now, although I do not suppose that even an archbishop could be found now to say anything of this kind, so rapidly have we advanced, yet it struck me at the time as the expression of a very curious view of art. It was not the unfortunate selection of names, all of which stood for artists pre-eminently decorative ; it was not the placid assumption that the Academy represented both the best judgment upon, and the best work in, art which the country produced ; it was not this so much as the assumption that

what is called decorative art belonged distinctly to a lower category, that its demands upon the mind, both of the artist and the spectator, were much less, and, in short, the whole thing was of lower aim, and required less skill and power to produce than what is called pictorial art. If, however, we are justified in drawing any conclusions from the history and practice of art, they seem to invert this view altogether.

I have no wish to set the sisters one against the other, or make odious comparisons, and indeed there is no need to do so, as, in my belief, both kinds of art in their higher development join hands. Their true relative position, indeed, may be expressed by the two limbs of a pair of compasses, inseparable and mutually dependent and helpful. It is certain that painting and sculpture, as commonly understood, cannot be in a good state, cannot reach any perfection, where the multitudinous arts that surround and culminate in them—that frame them in, in short—are not also in vigorous health and life. As well expect flowers to bloom without roots and stems, light, heat, and air, as to think that beautiful pictures or statues, or the sense that produces and admires them, can exist where there is no beauty in everyday things, no sources of harmonious thought about us, or delight of the eye in pleasant colour or form in things of daily use and surrounding I would go further, and say that where decorative or applied art is in a wholesome condition good pictorial or dramatic art will follow on as natural effect in the chain of evolution from certain ascertainable causes.

This is sufficiently obvious to actual workers in art; but "Truth," as has been said, "never can be confirmed enough," and

I am afraid that it has by no means reached this stage with a great majority of the people, not to speak of academicians and archbishops, and that it yet needs demonstration to many that beauty, both in life and art, is not something accidental and fanciful, the luxury and pursuit of a few dreamers and misguided beings; that it is an organic thing, having its own laws, however various, its own logical causes and consequences; that it, like everything else, is a result of that continual fierce and strenuous struggle for existence throughout nature; a living thing, and therefore ever-varying in its forms, having its own ever-recurring seasons — growth, perfection, decline, and renaissance — as we follow it down the long stream of time, and mark its many habitations from age to age.

We may well treasure the broken caskets, the priceless shells and fragments of art, cast by the ruthless flood of years on the desert shores; but let us not, in our anxiety and admiration for the beauty that is of the past, forget that beauty is a living force with us, a living presence, and that, like her prototype, for those who have eyes, she rises from our northern seas every summer morning, without the trouble of going to Cyprus. But she must be fed, clothed, and housed, and for these necessities we, as decorative artists, must be held mainly responsible. We are the trustees, as it were, of the common property of beauty, and we are the administrators of it, to use a well-worn phrase, from the cottage to the palace. Whether as architects, sculptors, painters, and designers, each after our kind, by the forms, the colours, and the patterns we put out, we are insensibly forming the tastes, by association, of present and future generations.

And, to return to the question touched at the outset, herein is the mark and goal of decorative art, properly speaking ; that whereas other considerations may weigh largely in painting a picture, such as desire to get force or expression, though, personally, I should say they should never outweigh considerations of beauty ; yet in decorative art, or, as it is not very logically called, applied art, these considerations are supreme. Decorum, balance, harmony, these are the graces who must advise us, though a whole crowd of secondary considerations clamours to be heard.

The current notion of decoration is summed up in the expression "flatness of treatment," and to the notion that this is the whole of the law and the prophets of decorative art may be dimly traced, perhaps, the conception of it in the mind of the archbishop, and in those of many superior persons. Hence, too, the flat-ironed primulas and the genus of enfeebled flora and fauna generally, which so often, alas, do duty as decoration. As if decorative art was a voracious but dyspeptic being, and required everything in heaven and earth to be thoroughly well boiled down before it could be properly assimilated.

Flatness of treatment, of course, is well enough ; it is the most single and obvious answer to one of the many problems a decorative artist has to consider. It is a part of his business, no doubt, to assert the wall, but his work does not begin and end there. But even if this was the last word of decorative art, it is by no means so simple a matter as it sounds. A world of judgment must come in, as at every step in all art properly so called. It needs our best faculties, whether we treat things in the flat or the

round; but as well might one be satisfied with the definition of painting as "the imitation of solid bodies on a plane surface," as with "flatness of treatment" as adequate characterisation of decoration.

The real test in decoration is adaptability, either to position or material. The exigencies of both often open the gates of invention; but assuredly no decoration has a right to the name which does not satisfy these conditions.

These are, after all, but the bones and the scaffolding, and though it is highly necessary to have them in their right places, the real triumphs of decoration come afterwards. And truly, the world, to the decorative artist, is all before him, where to choose. Nay, like every true artist, he has to make his own world, and people it with his thoughts. And in respect of thought decorative or monumental art, in its higher forms, is capable of expressing, by its command of figurative and emblematic resources, more than is possible to purely pictorial art. There is, in fact, nothing beyond its range, by reason of its being more suggestive than imitative; and in this direction it becomes again, as at its beginning, but in a higher sense, a language—a picture-writing.

And what language can be more definite and enduring, whether we read it from the artist's or the historian's, the antiquarian's or the philosopher's point of view? How faint an idea should we get of the nations of antiquity if all their art had perished! And it is all strictly decorative art, from the incised bones of the cave men to the frieze of the Parthenon. Therefore, say some, paint your own time, its manners and its customs, its coats and its

trousers. By all means, if you see your way to it ; but it would be a mistake to suppose that this was the only way of painting it. The mind has its habits and costumes as well as the body—a far more extensive wardrobe, indeed, which promises still to increase. Art does not live for the antiquary alone. He is never likely to be in want of material, even if Derby Days and Railway Stations were never put on canvas.

I know no better definition of beauty than that it is "the most varied unity, the most united variety."

Well, certainly there is no lack in our day of variety—I mean in the sense of style and material. To the worker in art it is a truly formidable prospect, and to enter the lists he needs to be well mounted and armed, in view of the forces arrayed against him. Modern life with all its hideous luxury and squalor ; its huge, ever-spreading, unwieldy, unlovely cities ; the bare skeleton and bald framework of new aims and inventions breaking through the rich tattered garment of ancient life and customs. How to reconcile these things, how to assert the supremacy of Beauty, to raise her standard everywhere, how to bring sweetness out of strength, would seem to need the strength and courage of an artistic Samson. At the same time it is as well to remember that too much preparation may be as much an encumbrance as a defence, and that great effects are sometimes produced by very simple means ; that giants have been floored by a well-directed stone in a sling, and the Philistines routed in consequence. I say it is as well to bear this in mind when we take our artistic life in our hand and go forth—to meet the monsters of our time clad in plate-glass, cast-iron, and fortified in desirable residences.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF ART

THE Architecture of Art is a somewhat comprehensive title, and it might not unreasonably be expected of me, before proceeding with the structure and treatment of the subject in perspective, to give some sort of scale, sketch, ground plan, or elevation, so that the general drift of my argument may be understood. I do not propose to deal exactly with the various forms and styles of architecture as they are, and have been manifested in plastic or graphic art; or the predilections of different designers and painters for certain forms over others as accessory to their compositions, interesting as such a comparative study might be. I am taking the term architecture in its widest sense, considering it not only as an art in its effect upon other arts, but as the fundamental, comprehensive, and sustaining framework both of life and thought; the historic and living background which influences and moulds all our ideas, the set scene upon which is enacted the ever-shifting drama of art.

In comparing the art of the present day, architectural or

otherwise, with the art of the past, especially of any well-defined epoch, whether mediæval or classical, we cannot fail to be struck with one great distinction underlying all superficial differences. Whereas the art of past ages seems to have germinated, to have been continually evolved in new forms, to be alive, and spontaneous, as it were, growing like a thing of nature, and expanding with man's ideas of nature and life; in our day this sense of spontaneity, this natural growth, is scarcely felt. Conscious and laborious effort takes the place of spontaneous invention, and originality is crushed by the weight of authority, is confounded and abashed by the mass of examples. No form of architecture or art seems to spring naturally and unaffectedly out of the actual necessities and demands of daily life.

It has been said that the great exhibition of 1851 is to be held answerable for a great deal; for the vulgarising and commercialising of art, and for the final break-up of old traditions in the crafts of design; but so far as this took place, it was only the effect of causes lying far deeper in the great economic changes, affecting the conditions of the production of all works whatsoever, which had been going on during the three previous centuries. That exhibition, as succeeding ones have done, merely summed up the results of these changes, and showed their effects, for good or evil, declaring to all whom it might concern that the apotheosis of commercialism meant the degradation of art.

This will seem a hard saying to such as are accustomed to believe that the accumulation of riches and the welfare of art go hand in hand. But let us look around us. Of course the

spirit of commercialism does produce startling results upon art, if not in it; and it is a wolf quite capable of seeing the advantage of sheep's clothing. There is, for example, plenty of building and house painting. Capitalism is nothing if not practical. The national instinct based on the national shibboleth that "every man's house is his castle," combining with the enormous growth of cities, has produced those miles and miles of brick cages which have more or less ruined the architectural character and proportion of every large town in the kingdom. What, then, are these? These are Englishmen's castles—on a small scale, it is true, and run together. There are not hills enough for the castles required, and what hills there are belong to somebody else. What is easier than to build them side by side? They will support each other, and economise bricks and mortar; and why trouble to make a fresh design for each castle? The little lords' wants are much the same as the big ones', only on a smaller scale, like his purse. He must, of course, have his outer line of defences. His portcullis, a drawbridge,—well, at any rate, iron railing and portico,—that he may speak with his enemy the tax-gatherer at the gate; his dining-room, drawing-room, bedroom, and bath-rooms, and gas and water laid on. Why should he not be happy and comfortable? and it is all so cheap too! Yet the speculative man and the man of profits—the kindly builders who multiply these miniature strongholds for the average Briton—we do not account exactly as public benefactors. Jack is rarely able to build his own house nowadays, so Jerry builds it for him; but the well-known drama of rat and cat, dog and cow with the crumpled horn, is still enacted, with perhaps some changes in the cast, and new scenery

and dresses. Here are the bee-cells ready made for the future occupants of the national hive, fit for the average man,—never mind if they do not always fit him; we cannot take account of round or square bodies; if the majority are hexagonal, the rest must put up with the inconvenience and a little squeezing: great is Average! Meanwhile, how fares it with art in the house that Jerry built? Do the streets produced on these principles, and at such a terrible rate, lend themselves either to pictorial or decorative treatment? Do they suggest any ideas, even, except of the dust-man? Well, but the man of profits is ready again. The Briton can get his art cheap too—wholesale or retail. He can have cheap dadoes and coloured glass thrown in here and there. If these are not enough, he can fill his house with early (or latest) English furniture, "surmounted by something Japanese," as the comic poet saith. Should his aspirations remain still unsatisfied, he can take the illustrated magazines to tell him about every art under the sun, and how it is done. In fact, if the literature of the subject could make artists and craftsmen, every street should be bristling with them. Every Christmas scatters oil paintings by our first masters, fresh from the printing-press, over the British Empire. A shilling or so will secure a whole gallery. Was ever anything like it in any age of art? Truly, no. Still we are not happy—we are not happy about our art. We English especially. We allow Frenchmen and Belgians to teach us painting, and our American cousins how to do nearly everything else.

Now, I am not going to say it is all the fault of the Royal Academy. That institution, as regards its chief feature, the annual Exhibition, is only another engine of the man of profits, which,

frankly recognising the commercialism of the age, endeavours, by special appointment and self-election, to adapt the business of picture-painting to it, without troubling much about architecture and sculpture, and leaving the other arts to shift for themselves. It is but due to say, however, that they endeavour to counteract the influence of the new masters in the summer by the works of the old masters in the winter, on the principle, perhaps, of the mediæval system of doing penance.

In the course of evolution we are passing through a period of disintegration. Art cannot escape the tendencies and influences of its time, which, indeed, it is of its very nature to illustrate. The artist has become more and more specialised, and the unity of the arts has been broken up. He is no longer the master craftsman among his workmen and apprentices, prepared to do all things in the province of design, from the pattern on the hem of a garment to the painting of an altar-piece. He is rather the juggler in the master's place, who with a particular sleight of hand can command a particular phase of sea or sky ; or he has the trick of the flattering glass in portraiture. Perchance he seeks to draw "iron tears" down the cheeks of (not Pluto) but the philanthropic Plutus, and golden ones from his pocket by his peculiar domestic pathos ; or in stage-lights strikes the contrast of wealth and misery, chilling his blood by melo-dramatic horrors ; or by seeking to glorify him in his happy hunting grounds surrounded by images of his sacred animals. As to painting, perhaps it has always been more or less at the bidding of the dominant orders of its day, but more naturally so since she left her roof-tree and parted company with architecture and sculpture, and all the fair and fascinating troop

controlled by a common influence and a common devotion, that throng in the splendid retinue of design.

Through the columns of the colossal architecture of time we look back down the long vista of ages and epochs, and read their spirit in the unmistakable language of art, coloured as it is by the human systems and beliefs of which it is the monument; whether as in the wall-paintings and reliefs of ancient Assyria, Egypt, and Persia, art is devoted to the glorification of military or sacerdotal despotism; or the systematised symbolism of an ancient nature worship, humanised and made beautiful by the Greek, informed by freedom and life; decaying amid the corruption of ancient Rome, or graced with a new splendour from the East, rising in the solemn magnificence of Byzantine art; and so through the vivid imagination of the Middle Ages, absorbed in the new mysticism, yet through the Church linked to the hopes as well as the fears of humanity. Then with the new thoughts and hopes of the Renaissance it rekindles its lamp at the shattered shrine of classical sculpture and learning, until choked with artifice and pedantry in succeeding centuries, it is forced back to nature and life again on the threshold of our own time. But again it is in danger from a new tyranny in that unscrupulous commercialism, which is not less dangerous because less tangible, and not less despotic because it is masked under the form of political liberty. Steam machinery, like a many-headed, many-handed dragon, rules industry literally with a rod of iron, and fain would it make art prisoner too, for its profit, but that its touch is death. Intended for the service of man and for the saving of human labour, it has under our economic system enslaved humanity instead, and become an engine

for the production of profits, an express train in the race for wealth, only checked by the brake of what is called over-production. Who can tell what will be the end of the journey?

Thus we are driven to the conclusion that the whole force of our economic system is against spontaneous art, and it is in spite of it that there is any life left in it yet. As William Morris has so strikingly pointed out, the system of producing all things for profit, which has succeeded the old one of producing for use; the necessity of selling in the big world market, division of labour, and lastly, machine labour, have rapidly destroyed the art of the people, and are fast vulgarising and destroying all local characteristics in art, as in costume and the surroundings of common life throughout the world. The system of absolute individual ownership of land, which, with the advance of commercialism, has displaced the older systems of tenure, and defrauded the people of their common rights wholesale, naturally leads to much destruction of natural beauty, and when not destroyed it is made inaccessible. It is also answerable, with the causes already named, for that other great disaster both to architecture and art already alluded to, the abnormal growth of the big towns, which year by year throws out its long and aimless feelers that feed upon the green country. When we speak of an advance in education, we too often forget that no education of the schools can compensate for life passed amid hills and woods, and by the sea, itself an education in a lore never to be forgotten.

Overshadowed by such conditions of life, what wonder is it that we should get our art by accident, that it should be in great measure the Art of Accident, which is really what modern

realism or naturalism comes to, in spite of elaborate systems of art training, and the elaborate unlearning of them which follows? The sense of beauty may be stunted, but Nature cannot be altogether suppressed under the most perverse social conditions. It is sometimes urged in defence of the artistic aspects of modern life that strange and wonderful momentary effects are seen, in London smoke-fogs, for instance, or amid the fiery eyes of railway signals, and our blackened Stygian rivers, where the Charon of the coal-wharf plies his trade. I have even heard an apostle of beauty defend those monuments of commercial effrontery and theatrical competition, our advertisement hoardings, covered with varicoloured posters, as in certain lights becoming transfigured so as to rival the tints on a Japanese fan. But it is one thing to find accidental beauties in the midst of monstrosities, jewels on dung-hills as it were, and quite another to defend the monstrosities for the sake of accidental beauties. The glow, the light fades, and with it the momentary exaltation of spirit; the north-east wind succeeds the south-west, and there being no dignity of form or beauty of proportion in our streets, they are apt to look more sordid and miserable than before. Grace and spirit may be shown by a child dancing to a barrel-organ in a smoky, squalid street, but one would rather see her on a village green dancing to a shepherd's pipe. We should aim at a condition of things which would not keep beauty at a distance from common life, or on the footing of an occasional visitor. No artist should be satisfied with such a cold relationship.

Art is not the mere toy of wealth, or the superficial bedizenment of fashion, not a revolving kaleidoscope of dead styles, but

in its true sense, in a vital and healthy condition, the spontaneous expression of the life and aspirations of a free people.

Before all things, then, in order that art may express itself in this free way, it is necessary that there should be something like a common life. We have no common life, because we have no life in common. Art is split up into cliques, as society into classes. Art should know neither; we want a vernacular in art, a consentaneousness of thought and feeling throughout society. "As it was" (to quote J. S. Mill) "in the days of Homer, of Phideas, or even of Dante." No mere verbal or formal agreement, or dead level of uniformity, but that comprehensive and harmonising unity with individual variety, which can only be developed among a people politically and socially free.

The signs of our times point unmistakably to great changes working in the direction I have indicated, which cannot fail to produce corresponding results in art. Consider, for instance, the probable effect on architecture of a collective, communistic mode of living. Instead of our rows of brick boxes, or piles of them in barracks, there would probably be a demand for quite another type of domestic architecture; we might see something like a revival of the plan of house which for so many ages proved so serviceable to humanity, from Homer to Shakespeare. The great hall as the common living-room, with private rooms for sleeping or solitude adjoining it; or some development of the collegiate plan. Buildings of such a type certainly lead to more dignity of result in architecture than the houses under our present system of tenure and individual plan are ever likely to. We all know, too, that the only chance for the mural painter is in build-

ings of a more or less public character. If buildings of the type I have mentioned became common, there would be plenty of work for him and the decorative artist generally, and so we might reasonably expect that painting and the sister arts would be restored to perhaps greater than their former dignity, beauty, and invention.

The decline of art corresponds with its conversion into portable forms of private property, or material or commercial speculation. Its aims under such influences become entirely different. All really great works of art are public works—monumental, collective, generic—expressing the ideas of a race, a community, a united people; not the ideas of a class. It is evident enough in our own time that art needs some higher inspiration than that of the cash-box. She suffers from a lethargy that cannot be cured by a prescription from the cheque-book; these are at best but stimulants that force an unnatural excitement, a feverish and brief activity at the expense of the whole system Private ownership may be able to command both skill and beauty, no doubt, but it is, as a rule, beauty of a lesser kind and considered in a narrower spirit, as it is addressed to the taste of an individual; while the fancies of rich and great persons, when their day is past, often come to be looked upon as curiosities. The art of a people, as expressed in their public buildings and monuments, possesses a kind of immortality.

We know the splendid results in art which grew on the rock of Athens, and the cities of mediæval Italy. Our own cathedrals, no less, will bear witness to the vitality in all the crafts of design at that period. Is it too much to suppose, seeing the intimate

connection between political, social, and artistic expression, and how both are affected by economical laws, that in the free federated communes which not improbably will in the future succeed the present jealous nationalities, with a large increase of leisure and opportunity for cultivation and enjoyment, the arts may develop even a higher vitality?

For art in its highest sense is but the faculty of expression. The higher, the richer, the fuller the life, the happier and more harmonious its conditions, the higher and more varied and beautiful will be the forms of its expression in art. But it is deep down in the life of the people that we must dig the foundations, and out of common speech and common labour and handicraft must be shaped the stones of this Architecture of Art. Without such foundation, and without the cement of fellowship, without due recognition of the equality and unity of all art-workers, and their mutual interdependence in building the great structure, we shall raise no enduring monument to be a delight to ourselves, and a memorial of us to those who come after.

Brilliant toys it may be we shall have. Surprises and stimulants, joyless elaboration, and pedantic weight of learning, gorgeous exotics, flowers and fruits, formed for the jaded appetites of a society in its decline, but we must give up all hope of vital and harmonious art enclosed in a casket of beautiful architecture.

Hence comes it that most of the efforts made to revive the arts and crafts among the people, without reference to their economic condition, are like so many attempts to grow the tree leaves downwards. As if an architect should put up an elaborate

scaffolding and begin with his roof, before he has decided on his ground plan, dug the foundations, or thought of drainage.

Real progress we must not expect to make until we have re-established the unity of the arts—a very different thing from uniformity. My late friend, Mr. J. D. Sedding, in whom we have lost a genial and sensitive spirit as well as a refined designer, in a discourse he made a while ago, in his generous enthusiasm was assigning the mural decorations of an ideal modern cathedral to various well-known popular painters. I believe even I myself was allowed a corner to amuse the children in. I have as great an admiration for the talents of my contemporaries as any one, but I cannot conceal from myself that it would be a very experimental scheme. It would be, metaphorically speaking, something like an attempt to anticipate the millennium, by trying to persuade the lion to lie down with the lamb in the same cage. But in the fifteenth century Mr. Sedding would have been safe enough ; the architect worked in harmony with the painter, the painter with the carver and metal worker, because each probably had a considerable knowledge of the other's craft and its limitations. Artists, therefore, knew what they had to do, and did it. There was nothing mysterious in this, taking into account the way in which men worked in those days and learned their crafts ; but it is a little depressing to think, with all our superiority in exact science and mechanism, how far we are from anything like certainty in art.

Whether the interest of scientific discovery has had anything to do with directing men's faculty of invention into another channel —and life does not allow time for the exercise of both—I do not

pretend to say ; but when science and art touch each other with the tips of their fingers, when science asks for the aid of applied art, as in mounting electric lights, for instance, or in order to fit any invention to use, it is very noticeable how artistic adroitness of adaptation lags behind the scientific invention. Perhaps there is no time for art to reconcile herself to the new discovery, or it is too soon superseded by another, and nobody cares.

No doubt the demands upon a designer in the present day, owing to such causes alone, are very heavy ; but I am inclined to think commercial pressure and hurry is heavier upon him. Thought is all-powerful, but there is no time to think ; fancy and imagination might play about the humblest accessory, but there is no time to play ; and all work, or rather uncertainty of work, and no play makes Jack a dull boy. But depend upon it, in conditions fair to humanity, art wants but little encouragement, only freedom and sympathy. The seed will grow fast enough in a favourable soil and climate, and bring forth flowers and fruits after its kind in due season.

FIGURATIVE ART

AT the present day, when, speaking generally, all forms of graphic art seem to owe their existence to the primary object of imitation of the more superficial, temporary, and accidental aspects of nature; there would seem to be some danger of forgetting that art has properly any other or loftier function. In painting, for instance, technical skill has become so all-important that the end is too often lost sight of in the means; a brilliant execution seems so sufficing that the hand appears to say to the brain, "I have no need of thee."

I am far from wishing to undervalue technical skill; we all know that it means hard years of labour and incessant industry. To disparage it would be like an attempt to throw discredit on the faculty of speech or writing; but we should soon tire of language and literature without thought or poetry, without analogy and illustration, or even if it gave us nothing but the best "special correspondence."

If we conceive all forms of plastic art to be so many different

methods of expression for the mind,—if we hold, in short, that art is a language, not only for the expression of particular moods and phases of nature, or portraitures of human character, but also for the conveyance of the higher thoughts and poetic symbolism of the mind,—then I think it is no longer possible to rest content merely with the results of industry and facility of hand, still less so when it is lavished upon the realisation of the commonplace, or squandered in the vivid portraiture of squalid detail, which paints vulgarity in all its glory, or spends all the resources of archæological knowledge and draughtsmanship upon the presentment of some triviality in antique dress, going a roundabout way in order to signify next to nothing with the utmost nicety.

Art has become a toy only when it rests satisfied here; and when it lives to please, it must please to live. The public is a big child, without a child's simple tastes, and cries continually, not for signs, but wonders; "Young men," as Falstaff says, "must live," and so it is all explained.

Admitting this, however, we should yet not be justified in assuming that the taste for, or sense of, figurative design, or allegory in any form, was extinct among us. Far from it.

Curiously enough we shall find it at what may be called the extremities of art, or rather, at the head and at the feet. We shall find it still in its original home, in the province of high poetic and decorative painting; and we find it also, in a rough-and-ready form, in our popular politico-satirical prints, where from week to week passing events, political situations, and popular characters are figured in every variety of pictorial parable, with varying degrees of ingenuity and epigrammatic point; but

the ingenuity is undoubted, and the popularity of this form of figurative art equally so.

There is also another form in which what may be called figurative art still holds its place in the popular mind—I mean on the stage, and in the region of spectacular ballet and pantomime. The ballet has a very ancient origin, no doubt, and it is of course entirely figurative, all feeling being expressed by action alone, without the help of words. It is the drama of the body. Modern appliances in stage machinery and lighting have given a new development to this species of show, which has great capabilities, and although there is generally a want of refinement, of controlling and directing taste on the whole, there is often a vast amount of ingenuity and pretty invention in scenes and details. In one of these spectacular ballets not long ago there was a gigantic figure of Time painted at the back of the stage. His hour-glass presently opened like a door, and out of it came one by one the hours, represented by damsels, each showing (besides her legs) distinct and appropriate emblematic feeling in her dress. Here, I thought, was a notion conceived in the true spirit of figurative design.

Fashion and the demands of the market may elbow aside the claims of figurative art in a picture exhibition, yet, one now and then has its effect, as, so to speak, after the whirlwind of sensation, the earthquake of literalism, and the fire of personal vanity, is heard the still small voice of figurative thought. While we can point to such examples of painting as Mr. Watts's "Love and Death," and Mr. Burne-Jones's "Fortune," it cannot be said that either the power or the feeling for the highest art has fallen to decay.

Between the region of party politics and the serene air of

ideal poetry there would seem to be a great gulf fixed, but the fact that at both ends of the scale symbolism should be the natural outcome, seems to show that strong feeling of either kind seeks for figurative expression. The passions, the seasons, the senses, the virtues, the vices; fate and time, love, fame, fortune, life, and death itself,—these all belong to the world of allegory, and continually reappear in new shapes, being by nature so protean that no fixed form may hold them. Each age has its own view of them, and that view is sure, sooner or later, to appear visibly in design.

It seems to be far too readily taken for granted that everything of importance concerning such ideas in art has been said long ago, that we must only expect more or less graceful shadows of what has been done in the past to decorate our stained windows, friezes, our panels, ceilings, and mosaics. Nay, there are people of the persuasion that ornamental art should be content to be ornamental and no more; they are content with figures elegantly employed in doing nothing, if, like the peer in the comic opera, they do it remarkably well. Allegory seems to depress them, and symbolism to put them out; life according to this school is "a tale of little meaning, though the words are strong."

I should not quarrel with this view if it led to high and satisfying results, and I am far from saying that the exclusive study of line, tone, arrangement, and method is not of great value. But so are grammars and dictionaries. Rhythm, metre, and diction do not make poetry, though they are essential to it; and my contention is that you cannot separate style and matter in art, any more than in literature, without serious loss.

But in a civilisation which is more distinguished by a morbid care for decency than for a love of beauty, when the cry is *Sartor Resartus*, and large profits are made by the sale of fig-leaves; in an age when no one has made up his mind upon first principles, and there is a premium on reserve; when men are chary of avowing in any shape their dearest convictions, not from fear of bodily jeopardy, but out of consideration for the feelings of others, or, perhaps, their own social position, any pictorial expression of ultimate ideas, or vigorous thought embodied in vital design, must of necessity be rare.

The ancient religions of the world were nothing but figurative systems—personifications and symbols of the forces of nature, varying in different countries as they were gradually evolved from some perhaps common primitive type, or grew naturally out of the independent imaginings of the human mind; certainly all have elements in common, and varieties of the same conceptions appear again and again, through endless modifications and developments, as the same plants vary in different soils, and under different conditions. A foundation of natural mythology was common to them all, and this mythology was conceived and modified according to the genius of the race amid which it grew. The Greek religion had the same origin, but the Greeks alone of the ancient nations set free from traditional forms in their art this nature worship; we may follow it from its primitive archaic types till it is transfigured in heroic shape. Religion transformed by art becomes poetry, and all things were made subservient to the dominant sense of beauty. Of this Greek choice we have a beautiful figure or emblem in the "Judgment of Paris," which

art never tires of repeating, and which, like all the Greek stories, never seems to lose its significance.

In the sublime fragments of the sculptured groups which decorate the pediments of the Parthenon, even as we see them in our own Museum, the eye is first charmed and won by the rhythmical sweep and play of line, the masterly counterbalance of curve, the largeness of style in the treatment of individual forms, and what must have been their triumphant combination in an harmonious whole. We, perhaps, think last and least of the poetic thought, or scheme of thought, which comprehends and informs the entire design. Yet here is figurative art in its highest form. Heroic shapes personify and express the physical and moral forces of nature, and all are subservient to, and contribute to the climax (I am thinking now of the eastern pediment), from the sun-god who rears his arms out of the sea to urge his tossing horses, to the fates who bring the hour of the glorious birth, to which, as the crowning fact and summit of the design, all seems to attach as the highest aspiration of the Athenian mind.

After the lapse of ages, through darkness, destruction, and neglect, these fragments remain, not only unequalled as sculpture, but true as figurative design, as expressing what Nature herself continually teaches—namely, the triumph of mind over matter, of the dominion of the higher organism over the lower, or, in modern philosophic phrase, the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence.

It is strange to think how from the ancient mythological sources in the dim past flow down the little streams that serve

everyday life and humble domestic use. Scattered in the drift, as it were, of a common speech—itself a conglomerate of so many elements—like fossils, how many well-worn fragments we meet of symbolism in proverb, or fable, or allusion. They are common property, the decorations of everyday talk, repeated again and again to emphasise and illustrate the most ordinary conversation, like the little woodcut devices used by the early printers over and over again to enliven their close pages of type.

It would be an interesting but almost endless task to collect and sift such fragments, and trace each back to its origin. Many come from the widest-read and most ancient books, such as Æsop and the Scriptures, and centuries of human experience are perhaps condensed in some scrap of proverbial wisdom or folklore. Indeed, as regards mankind at large it would appear that the figurative element was the only enduring one. History becomes lost in tradition and mythology. Lesser personalities are rolled into the greater, and greater personalities are lost in types. Events are generalised, and the image of the past experience of the race upon the general mind becomes generic, like that of the visual impressions of the individual, as Mr. Francis Galton has so strikingly demonstrated.

It is this natural tendency of the human mind which gives figurative art its importance ; experience is the clay on which it works. Imagination is the creative force, and sense of beauty the controlling power. A mental efflorescence springs from life's rough way, which in words becomes a figure of speech or rises to poetry, and in design, emblem and allegory.

The love of figurative art, which had been embodied in so

many rich and strange shapes all through the Middle Ages, bound up with the mysticism and gorgeous ritual of the Roman religion, or entangled with the quaint conceits of heraldry, displayed in mystery show and masque and pageant, or emblazoned upon the illuminated parchment, rose to new life with the Renaissance, and found with the art of printing new means of expression in woodcut and copper-plate.

The allegorising power of poets like Spenser found its counterpart in the designs of such artists as Albert Dürer and Holbein, and the best inventions of the emblem books, which are so characteristic of the period.

The taste for these emblem books seems to have lasted all through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and into the eighteenth. Collection after collection issued from the press in all the principal centres of western Europe. The most complete and widely-known were, I suppose, those of Andrea Alciati, which appear in so many different editions since the first, printed at Milan in 1522.

The art of the designs in these books varies, of course, very greatly, according to the current artistic capacity and taste ; sometimes rich and inventive, or quaint and graceful, but often little more than a kind of pictorial heraldry, where the moral intention overmasters the artistic power, and becomes merely a label or ensign to point the moral of the emblem writer.

There exists a ceiling at Blickling Hall, in Norfolk, in the library there, which is curiously like an emblem book worked out in an ornamental scheme. It is in low relief, in plaster or some kind of gesso or stucco, and is said to have been done by Italian

workmen. It is panelled out in a way characteristic of the time of the house, which bears the date 1619. In the panels are curious figure designs—allegorical representations of the senses, the virtues, and the vices—which remarkably correspond in conception and treatment with their next of kin in some of these old emblem books. The general effect is very rich and agreeable, and though now white, it was probably coloured in the manner of the elaborate ceilings of the middle Italian Renaissance taste, as we find them, for instance, in the Doria Palace at Genoa, in the work of Giovanni da Udine.

Mr. Morris tells us that all the leading types of pattern design sprang originally from ancestral forms which were definitely symbolic ; so that art, which we now call purely ornamental, once was made expressive of mental ideas,—like Persian and Arabic texts in Eastern carpets and tiles, where language and ornament are often one and the same thing. The descent of our Alphabet itself has been traced in a direct line back to the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic signs ; and these again were formed into a species of alphabetical system from an earlier form of picture or emblem writing. Even after they had been systematised into the equivalent of an alphabet, pure symbols are used for the expression of abstract notions, such as thirst, for instance, where a calf is figured above the zigzag lines which signify water.

The hart drinking from a stream is a well-known early Christian symbol ; we see it in mosaic in the churches at Ravenna, with the vine and the peacock. These last, too, seem to have been a favourite device to carve upon marble sarcophagi, and it may well be contrasted with later Christian taste, in its choice

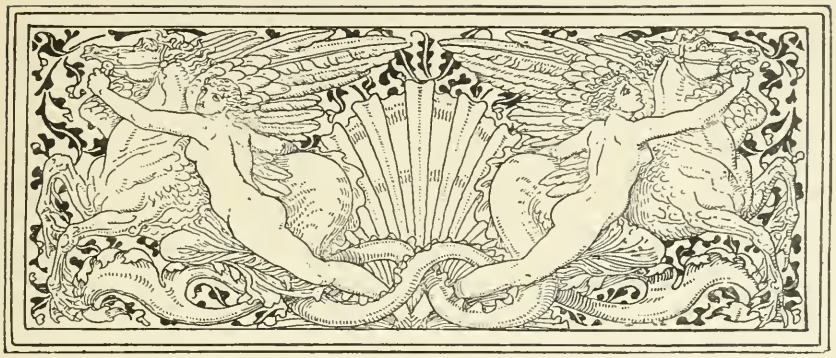
and treatment of symbols in the modern graveyard ; and what a strange medley of emblems meet us there !

Not less mixed is the symbolism of commerce, as exemplified in the variations of the modern trade-mark. Æsop and the Bible are again drawn upon, as well as Pagan mythology ; but here again perhaps the less said about art the better. It is only interesting as showing the value in the purely practical sense a figurative device may have, something which is distinctive and easily identifiable. It is in some sense a survival of picture-writing or hieroglyphic, without its old Egyptian ornamental sense and distinction of style.

Philosophy, too, in her most modern dress has recourse to symbol. The high priest of Evolution adopted a device for the cover of his book, showing a plant springing upwards from earth, and putting forth leaf, bud, and finally flower ; a caterpillar among the leaves, a chrysalis pendent from the bud, and a butterfly hovering over the open blossom. Nothing could well be more tersely, and at the same time comprehensively, expressive of perhaps the greatest and most far-reaching theory of our time.

Nothing, then, appears to be beyond or beneath the range of expression in figurative design ; no touch or conception of life but is made more emphatic and comprehensible by being cast into a concrete image—a kind of visible and picturesque logic to satisfy the eye as well as the mind. But while vigorous design, Atlas-like, can sustain the world of thought upon its shoulders, no breath of thought can quicken dead art into life again. It is the true test of really vital design that it should carry without effort its own intention, and never be over-weighted.

This vigorous mental vitality as manifested in art is always characteristic of the great periods. Nor is it spent in one direction only, but, like the life-blood, circulates freely through the whole body of art ; so that the chased pattern upon a piece of armour or a watch-plate, the design of a dress fabric or the woodcut ornaments of a printed book, no less than the frescoed or tapestried wall and the highly-wrought easel picture, declare the same nervous energy and endless untiring inventiveness in beautiful and fertile design.



SCULPTURE: FROM A DECORATOR'S POINT OF VIEW

AN age in which the ornamental sense in art is so little understood—an age which cares only for superficial picturesqueness or photographic naturalism is certainly not favourable to any high development of sculpture, which in times past has been the noblest and most expressive of the decorative arts. We have to recognise the fact that sculpture, in common with all art and all forms of life, lives by its capacity of adaptability to circumstances. Perhaps she has a harder struggle for existence than her sisters, and in the absence of zeal for great monumental works it is perhaps not altogether surprising that she sometimes is content to furnish toys for the drawing-room, and finds the perpetuation of nonentities more lucrative than the pursuit of heroic design.

That love of picturesqueness, of naturalism, too, which in our day asserts itself in season and out of season, and, unfortunately, often quite regardless of material or place, has left its mark on

sculpture, as in painting. Perhaps it would be truer to say that it has revolutionised, or at least made a formidable insurrection in both ; so much so that sculpture and painting, in some instances, appear to be striving to change places—painters sacrificing everything for an altitude of relief which suggests departure from the canvas altogether, and sculpture vying with painting in the imitation of textures and scenic effects which cry out for the palette.

For in sculpture, at least in marble, despite all the resources of tangible relief and rotundity, it is curious that naturalism of treatment should be far less suggestive of nature than the same thing in painting. The most elaborate imitation of textures and surfaces (such as we see among the modern Italians) has, in the absence of local tint, an exaggerated and, consequently, unreal look ; and if there is no strong element of design to counterbalance the elaboration—which, indeed, is offered in its place—the failure as a work of art is complete.

The importance of designing power in sculpture is obvious enough when we consider that a sculptor, in designing a figure or group in the round, has really to make, or ought to make, not one design merely, but a whole series, in order that his work shall be expressive from every point of view. This necessity, which is one of the difficulties, is also one of the advantages of sculpture, and develops its capabilities for expressive design to the utmost. Thus, while the witchery of imitative skill may lead painters astray, in sculpture we are forced back to what may be called the more purely artistic qualities of design of style ; terms which imply much—which comprehend, perhaps, all the essentials

of good art. Without distinction in these the craze for imitative naturalism, or whatever we like to call it, only ends, so far as I am aware, in attempts more or less unsuccessful to turn sculpture into portrait painting or *tableaux vivants*.

It is very much the difference between imitation and expression, or repetition and creation in art; and this means of course all the difference in the world, both as regards the artist and his public.

Imitation only requires industry, but design demands inventive power. Design might be defined as the constructive sense controlled by the sense of beauty. One may have plenty of energy, plenty of frank naturalism in a work, but if we have not the sense of beauty in art it profiteth nothing.

This is of course obvious enough as applied to art with a distinctly decorative purpose, but it seems curious that while it is taken for granted that you cannot do without grace or charm of some sort in this direction, as regards what may be called pictorial art, whether in painting or sculpture, given plenty of force and fact, grace and charm seem often quite secondary considerations, hardly missed if altogether absent.

To me, I confess, such distinctions seem artificial and injurious to art. A statue, or a picture, or a pattern must be an organic whole, whether it is itself a whole or a part. It must agree with itself, or it will agree with nothing, whether it be a frieze, a string-course, or a bust.

And after all it is this humanising and controlling sense—this sense of beauty, balance, decorum—this sixth or artistic sense, in short, manifested in so many different materials, methods, and

styles, varying with climate and character, but articulate in every tongue—which is the really permanent quality. Without it you may have science, archæology, antiquarianism, imitation of nature —many things very useful in their way, but not art.

PAINTING AT THE PRESENT DAY: FROM A DECORATOR'S POINT OF VIEW

I WILL ask you to figure to yourselves an aspiring decorator, filled with the latter-day enthusiasm for beautifying human surroundings, and recognising a manifest, if superficial, improvement in domestic architecture and adornment,—recognising the excellent and sympathetic work that has been done by certain individual workers, or associated workers, in various arts and crafts, and still undaunted by the rapacity with which competitive commerce and the modern industrial system seize upon and spoil their ideas, and like

> ——the grim wolf with privy paw
> Daily devours apace, and nothing said,—

undaunted, I say, let us suppose our decorator filled with this fine enthusiasm, so as to have almost persuaded himself that we are on the brink of a second Renaissance; let us suppose him to turn for a moment from his all-engrossing studies in stained glass, tapestry, *repoussée* metal work, wood-carving, pottery, and the like, amid

which he may have become possibly oblivious of the progress of painting; to turn from wall-hanging and wall-paper to what might be supposed to be the crown and summit of its decoration, the wall picture, or, to speak figuratively, from the courts of South Kensington to the galleries of Burlington House—I mean in the time of its May blossoming.

He enters the exhibition hoping to find his aspirations stimulated, if not satisfied, by some show of what he has been accustomed to consider the higher aims and influences in art—primarily the search for beauty of line, colour, and execution, where indeed they are practically unfettered, in the technical sense, except by the four sides of a frame (which in itself might contribute as the setting to the gem). Here, as our decorator would reasonably suppose, these qualities would be considered the prime necessities, the indispensable ingredients of the work, whatever sort of pathetic, dramatic, or high poetic expression a picture might bear.

But what are the actual evidences that meet his eye? To begin with, he is appalled by the effect of the galleries as a whole —a number of odd-sized painted panels in gilt mouldings, jostled together with scarcely any reference to scale or harmony, either of subject or colour. Here, perhaps, a life-sized human head and shoulders in startling relief appears almost bursting through some silvery retiring landscape distance; there tragedy and farce side by side, and on the same wall tradition on crutches next the most naked naturalism, with "no language but a cry," or perhaps some piece of sentimentality leaning, as it were, on the shoulder of the coldest academic style.

Supposing our decorator to have at least partially recovered

from the first shock of this impressionistic picture, and to have sufficient presence of mind to go more into detail, what does he find? Much ability certainly, much energy, much industry, but wasted for the most part upon objects and subjects either unrewarding or repulsive, and squandered in aimless, and therefore inartistic imitation; much striving after instantaneous photographic effects both in figures and landscapes—miscalled Realism; much academic learning and archæology; much sentimental as well as melodramatic feeling; plenty of domestic and quasi-historical incidents, some symptoms of war fever breaking out in red coats; plenty of sporting and animal life—live and dead stock; a superabundance of the personal element as in individual portraits, although the term portrait might often be more justly claimed by landscape painters, portraits so called being as often as not treated as if they were landscapes, and landscapes as portraits, in these days.

In these, and such as these, then, our decorator will haply discover the leading tendencies in modern painting. But he will reflect it does not need that men should be specially painters to exhibit such qualities as these. For any strong evidence of any feeling for, or search after style, design, composition, beauty of form, beauty of colour, or perfection of workmanship, not to speak of poetic expression—for those qualities, in short, most peculiarly and distinctively artistic—qualities at least inseparable from art with any title to be called decorative—our decorator might look long and far without finding much to cheer his drooping spirits.

He will depart from the exhibition a sadder, if not a wiser man; but he will say to himself, "It was not always so." He will go into our national collection, and there he will find abundant

evidence that painting was once what he fondly hoped it might be again, at the head of the decorative arts. Then perhaps he would go down to his house justified, possibly to dream, and, especially if he had an impression of Dürer's "Melancholia" in his room, his dream might take some such shape as this (were it possible to conceive in an emblematic spirit such a being): The genius of modern painting would appear amidst the ruins and relics of ancient art attired in the last Paris fashion, leaning upon a photographic camera, with canvas and palette set, and looking in her paint-box for an idea. Instead of Amorini should flit around her the bats and owls of criticism, uttering discordant cries, and one flying with a scroll on which should be inscribed, "There is no beauty but where you would least expect to find it; there is no truth but literalism."

ON THE STRUCTURE AND EVOLUTION OF DECORATIVE PATTERN

MAN might be distinguished from other animals by his pronounced love of ornament alone, or at least by the capacity for producing it. Evidences of the impulse to ornament are found mixed up with his earliest traces on the earth, and some of his most elaborate efforts have been upon his own person. In North Borneo, for instance, I believe, to this day a very elaborate system of tattooing is still practised by special artists, a great part of the body being covered with elaborate patterns of fantastic animals and other devices.

From the poetic or artistic side pattern might be defined as the Notation of silent music. Certain decorative units are the keynotes. Primitive patterns, like primitive music, consist of very simple elements—of very few notes. Repetition is the chief factor in the development of both—Repetition and Rhythm. If music was discovered by blowing into a hollow reed, design might have begun by experiments with a stick on the sand or

soft clay. "Here is a sound," says the musician, "let us make music." "Here is a surface," says the designer, "let us make a pattern."

The art of pattern-making might be defined as the constructive sense applied to surfaces. The ornamental designer is not so absolutely bound by structural laws as the architect; but the fact that the structural laws which govern his art are more mental than physical does not make them less binding or less real. Designing is not mathematics or geometry, but there appears to be a certain logic of line and colour in design which, given certain fundamental forms and characters, demands certain necessary sequences.

The system on which a design is built bears much the same relation to it as the skeleton does to the outward human form, and a knowledge of the skeleton is considered indispensable to the student of the figure. If a pattern, for instance, be rectangular in its general plan, however enriched by detail, the law of its fundamental construction must be acknowledged. Every line, every form, demands a reason for its existence. The designer commits himself to a curve; that curve cannot remain as an isolated fact, or it would be meaningless. It leads naturally to a counterbalancing curve, and then probably asks to be repeated; for in dealing with curves and angles we are really dealing with forms of a most expressive language, and one which cannot be clearly articulated even, unless we have something to say. The character of a pattern, then, is governed by its plan; and although there is no limit to the diversity and variety of a design, this organic necessity will make itself felt—much as a backbone is a necessity to a vertebrate. Beyond this

the character of a design must be determined by the physical conditions of its execution and its ultimate purpose.

It is obvious that a design intended to extend horizontally, as, for instance, a running border or frieze, is naturally governed by different laws from one intended to repeat and spread itself vertically as well as horizontally over a large field, such as a wall-pattern. And a design fitted for a hanging will not adapt itself to a floor or ceiling. A pattern, a design, should at once speak for itself. Its plan should declare its purpose, and its treatment acknowledge the limitations and necessities—the characteristics, in short, of the material in which it is produced, and the method by which it is worked. Such considerations as these, we all know, are necessary to the successful existence of a pattern, and when they are successfully met we have only another instance of the survival of the fittest. For it happens in practice that a pattern which precisely fits such mechanical conditions has a longer life than one which, though perhaps more beautiful, in some details does not adapt itself to its position or to the necessities of reproduction so well. This applies more particularly to patterns intended for reproduction by processes of handicraft or manufacture, but it holds good also, though in a lesser degree perhaps, in all applied art, and can never be left out of account by the designer. Perfect fitness and beauty ought, of course, always to accompany each other—as a matter of fact, other conditions being equal, they do, as beauty is really organic ; but mistakes are sometimes made by introducing in design elements which properly belong to other provinces of art,—for instance, when a carver or a weaver aims at superficial *imitation* of natural forms in his work rather than

their constructive value in design, or ornamental effect as pattern. For pattern, in its simplest form, and regarded solely in its abstract technical sense, apart from symbolism or imitation of natural form, is nothing but a series of modifications in the structure and correlation of line, such modifications being suggested or determined by the necessities of adaptation to spaces, objects, and materials.

Taking line, then, as the basis of ornament, a simple horizontal line forms, as it were, the primal decorative unit. Repeat it in parallels, and we get at once the type of a whole series of the simplest, but perhaps the most widely-used of patterns. It gives us the banded courses of brick and marble, the reeded mouldings and strings in architecture, the endless linear borders in ceramics; whilst in textiles it seems, in the ever-recurring barred and striped patterns, as if it were the Alpha and Omega of design, and that like Hope—slightly to alter the well-known line—it

——springs eternal on the human *vest*.

But probably the same reasons for its perpetuation are found cogent both in building and weaving—that is to say, the fundamental structural necessities of both lend themselves naturally to that system of varying the surface, and it seems universally pleasing to the human race.

But we are not very far on the road of invention. Satisfactory as bands, bars, and horizontal mouldings may be, cunningly proportioned and nicely placed, man cannot live by parallels alone. He needs other decorative units to make him happy. It is not known who struck the first circle. The inventor of the compasses —the prehistoric Giotto—remains in obscurity. Perhaps the hollow reed is again the medium; and the circular mark which

would be left by the impression of the cut end of a reed on the soft earth might have given the circle to design. So, perhaps, Pan is the father of the arts of design. However this may be, with spheres all around, the idea must soon have germinated. Man needed to look no farther than the sun and the sea to find the genesis of pattern ; nay, he had its elements in his own frame, which, as Vitruvius demonstrates, comprises, or is comprised in, both square and circle ; and these may be said to divide the responsibility for the whole race of pattern systems between them —to stand in the world of design as a kind of Cœlus and Terra to an endless offspring.

The types of pattern to which they give rise are suggestive, too, of different characteristics of race, language, and civilisation. Broadly speaking, the square with its derived chequers, zigzags, and diapers might almost stand as a symbol of the ornament of the northern nations, associated as these forms are with Scandinavian and Gothic pattern work ; while, on the other hand, the circle, with its derived scrolls and spirals, seems figurative of the greater suppleness and sensitiveness to beauty of the Southern ; and it is to ancient Greece and to Italy that we must look for their most perfect types.

Square and angular patterns strike at once by their emphasis and rigid logic ; while the circular and curvilinear types appeal rather to sense of grace and rhythm. For richness and intricacy we must go to where both perhaps came from—to the home of the Arabesque—to the East—the fountain-head of patterns, poured forth in a continual stream of imaginative energy and inventive subtlety. While the Frank has spent himself in the

pursuit of the superficial facts of nature, and of the portrayal of life and character, seeking energy rather than beauty, and fact rather than ideal expression, the Asiatic has been content to wrap himself in a mesh of delicate fancy; and if he regards nature it is rather through a series of carefully-chosen symbolic forms that subserve his subtle ornamental sensibility.

Returning to our primitive square and circle, we find that they not only give us patterns and pattern systems by simply reproducing themselves, but that, by subdivision and extension, they give us certain offshoots which form universal decorative units, as well as fundamental geometric plans or governing systems of the whole race of what may be called organic patterns.

The leading forms of these offshoots from the square and circle are—from the square—the Chequer, the Fret, the Zigzag, the Diaper.

From the circle—the Scroll, the Spiral, the Fan, the Scale, the Oval.

These are not only decorative units and linear patterns complete in themselves, but furnish the system, scaffolding, or skeleton on which a multitude of rich and varied designs are built; as the beautiful lines, curves, and contours of the human figure are built upon the strong and symmetric framework of the bones, and form together an organic whole. These forms, too,—these decorative units which are geometrically evolved from the square and the circle,—are also constructive in their origin. The simplest of all patterns arise naturally from certain necessities of construction. Even the linear (alternating) arrangement, produced by the ordinary method of laying bricks, is in some sort a pattern,

as well as those more specialised methods in masonry such as opus reticulatum and herring-bone work, for instance. The lattice work of the joiner and engineer also ; the patterns formed by the plaiting of grass or rushes in matting, which give us the chequer ; the spirals in the twisting of the strands of a rope, and the radiating ribs of a fan,—these all may be looked upon as the sources of our decorative units, and have their prototypes in the natural world, where, above all, we find constructive strength united with beauty and fitness, governed by adaptability to circumstance.

The Fan, indeed, holds universal sway, not only in the hands of women, but in the worlds both of nature and design.[1] In structure and system the Fan seems to be one of the first principles of organic construction, and is illustrated everywhere—from a bird's wing to a vaulted ceiling, and in decorative art spreads from the Greek Anthemion to the Japanese screen. The Japanese artist is never tired of demonstrating its fitness for every ornamental purpose. It is his dearest decorative unit, and he certainly proves himself a master in its use.[2]

Of the Fan, considered both as a controlling system and as a decorative unit, it would be easy to recall examples in almost every age and style—through Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Gothic, and Renaissance periods. From the rising to the setting of the

[1] A splendid instance of its principle in combination with another—the scale—may be found in the construction of the peacock's tail, or rather tail coverts, the magnificent effect of which when spread is as much owing to its construction as to its colour.

[2] As showing the constructive sense in Japanese design see, for instance, the small books of designers' patterns and crests for demonstrations of the way in which designs not geometric in themselves, such as animals, may yet be governed or bounded by geometric forms, such as the circle, and the immense variation of which similar pattern systems are capable.

sun of art, the fan constantly reappears, and seems very early to have been associated with ideal beauty, inasmuch as the fan in the shell form has long been accepted in art as the cradle of Venus. Its felt applicability to so many forms of decoration lies, no doubt, in the fact that, structurally considered, the fan unites the minimum of lightness with the maximum of strength, as well as in its capacity for variation, and adaptability to position and material.

It would be interesting to trace the different treatment of the same decorative unit by different races and in different countries, and to hunt them down to their primitive type. I have often thought it would be possible to classify patterns, like plants, into species and genera. The analogy between the two is perhaps nearer than is commonly supposed,[1] for each is subject to those general laws of existence which control the existence of all art no less.

Art, of course, is not to be confounded with either science or nature, but there is a scientific side to art. When we come to principles of Design one may well fear the valley of dry bones, where so many champions have, alas! left theirs. From the point of view of the designer, who seeks to confirm his practice and experience by general principles and definitions—which, after all, are but the boundaries and defences of territory already gained and peopled—it would be possible to make definitions of the elements of ornament "refutation tight" as far as words go. In this sense it always strikes me that Professor Ruskin's "ingenious friend," of whom he speaks in his *Elements of Drawing*—his correspondent who defined ornament as consisting of "Contrast,

[1] Patterns, like plants, illustrate, in their arrangement and structure, those broad principles which divide the world of design—the symmetrical, the alternate, and the spiral systems.

Series, and Symmetry"—very nearly hit the mark. The demonstration given, too, with the test ingredients offered by Ruskin was, as far as it went, triumphant; and although it might not have been strictly ornament, it was at least skeleton ornament, and it is something to acknowledge that ornament should have a skeleton.

If we said that ornament was the systemisation of form it would perhaps be more comprehensive; but define as we may, the important thing is the motive power—be the machinery theoretically perfect. All depends on the use the designer makes of his system and ingredients. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and even then it is not always safe to affirm it could not have been made any other way. The truth is that pattern making, whatever are the elements, and however necessary certain sequences are, and its successful composition, depend finally on the inventive fertility of the artist's mind; and this, again, may indefinitely be depressed or stimulated by the conditions under which he lives.

I do not pretend in this short paper to give more than a sketch of what is really a very vast subject, but if I have succeeded in awakening an interest in it, and induced any of my readers to pursue it farther themselves, I shall be very pleased. To those who would like to do so, I can recommend two excellent little books by Mr. Lewis F. Day, himself a well-known and practical designer. They are the *Anatomy of Pattern* and the *Planning of Ornament*, both published by Mr. Batsford of Holborn.

It seems to me that one of the difficulties of designers in the present day is rather the embarrassment which comes from the

overwhelming mass of examples from every age and clime with which he is overwhelmed. It requires a very powerful artistic digestion to assimilate such a mass and such a variety of ornamental styles. The consequences, too, are evident enough around us, as what may be properly called the ornament of the period is an extraordinary jumble—a hybrid production resulting from a mixture in the mind of all these styles,—just as if one were to consult the dictionaries of all the tongues living and dead, and take a few words there and a few words here and call the results language or poetry.

If, like David with the armour he had not proved, our designer could put these things away from him, and rely on the sling and the stone of constructive necessity and mother wit, one cannot help feeling the result would be better.

If we must have ornament let it be good as far as it goes, and grow naturally out of the constructural necessities and material of the work. The importance of good design and handicraft cannot be exaggerated, for upon their health depends the health of all art whatsoever ; and the test of the conditions of the arts in any age must be sought in those crafts of design which minister to the daily life and common enjoyment of humanity.

A man may be able, with the proceeds of labour, to spend thousands of pounds upon a single picture, but it does not follow that art is making progress. There is no artistic inspiration in thousands of pounds—the sculptor cannot even make a golden image out of it. Wealth and luxury can never really foster art—they must eventually stifle it. The artist must keep in touch with nature and life ; he must keep his eye fresh and his heart open if

his work is to touch men and dwell in their memories. And it matters not whether he wield the chisel, the hammer, or the brush, or work at the forge, the carpenter's bench, the stone-mason's shed, on the scaffold or in the studio ; if he feels his work, if he acquires the skill to make a thing of beauty, he is an artist in the true sense of the word.

ART AND LABOUR

HOW define Art or Labour? We might dryly attempt to sum up the artificial distinctions between them by saying that—(1) Art is the inventive use of tools and material. (2) Labour is the mechanical use of tools and material.

But on examination (regarding the whole field of handicraft) the two would be found to be so closely connected—so much art or skill in even the simplest operation of labour, so much labour involved in even the simplest form of art—each so involved in the other, that it would be very difficult to draw the line and to say where labour ends and art begins.

Leaving the abstract, let us consider the concrete—the personal. Let us look at what might be called the two extremes. Look at the labourer with his shovel, on the one hand, and the painter (who of late has monopolised the name of artist), on the other, with his palette and brushes.

The resemblances are perhaps not so striking as the differences. It is true the labourer is engaged in moving, say, earth

or minerals from one place to another with his shovel. The painter is engaged in moving earth or minerals (in the form of colours) from one place to another—from his palette to his canvas with his brush. Both are contributing to the best of their ability to the wants of man. The labourer who may be supposed to be digging the foundations of a house is clearly contributing to his fundamental necessities; while the artist is presumably contributing to his sources of pleasure and refinement, though clearly his work will not be much in demand until the walls are built—until there is something to put his picture *on*.

And if we were to inquire further into the history of the maintenance and of the tools and materials of either workman, we should discover that both were alike dependent upon a vast chain of associated labour, which makes their work, nay, their very existence, possible.

As to the economic value of the work of each to the community, that again depends upon conditions. If there was a scarcity of houses the labourer's labour would (or naturally ought to) be the most valuable; if there was a superfluity of houses, then the painter's labour ought naturally to be the most valued. In gauging the value of the labour of each from the point of view of the barest utility, there can be no doubt that the painter would kick the beam.[1]

As to the *actual* or market value, if we take as a criterion the monetary reward of each, it is quite the other way, at least, in

[1] Yet if art depends upon labour, labour also depends upon art. The architect must plan the house before the labourer can get to work, and design of all kinds must exist in the head before it can be executed by the hands. What we want is to bring heads and hands together again, and on the same shoulders, and not keep them as classes apart.

what are called civilised countries; although both artist and labourer in their economic condition are alike in this, that *neither is certain of a livelihood*; and the position of both is affected *by competition and the general state of trade—not*, observe, *by the actual wants of the community*! Well, as to wages, as we know, there are all the degrees between them—between, say, 6d. an hour on the one hand, and 600 or 6000 pence and upwards an hour on the other; alternating, in each case, however, with *nothing* an hour.

I think it will be agreed that this is not a very satisfactory or artistic state of things.

So much then by way of a rough sketch of the relative positions of artist and labourer; and other things being equal, I think it would be extremely difficult to prove that either is more useful to the community than the other. But as there is certainly labour in art (as with the best talents it requires great devotion and industry to become an artist and craftsman), so also there is a great deal of art in labour, even of the kind commonly called "unskilled."

I know of no labour which can be properly described as the exertion of mere brute force. The slightest practical acquaintance with any kind of manual work is sufficient to convince one that there is always a better and a worse way of doing anything, and that it is not the amount of force, but the amount of *effective* force, which counts in doing any work.

Try a hand at any ordinary piece of field work, for instance. Take up a scythe and see what you can do in the hayfield without previous practice, and then see if the results of your efforts do not

convince you that there is a great deal of art in the management of such an apparently simple implement.

One has often been struck with the splendid action and admirable precision with which two men will alternately hammer at an iron wedge, when old pavement is being taken up in our streets. The hammer is swung at the full sweep of the arms and brought down with the utmost economy of concentrated force upon the head of the wedge. This is the art of manual labour. When the dockers and gasmen strike it is not found so simple a matter to fill their places (apart from the question of "blacklegs"), and amateurs in manual labour are soon found to be very different from the professional artists of labour. The lifter and carrier of weights, the hewer of wood, and the drawer of water have a practical acquaintance with the nature of things (under constantly varying secondary conditions)—of poise and pressure—which is far more immediately valuable than any general *theoretic* acquaintance with the laws of nature.

In attempting any unwonted piece of work, say, in sawing a piece of wood, the inexperienced always wastes force. In all labour it is the *economy of force* which makes force effective, and this must be the result of experience. Even the rate at which manual labourers work is fixed by general experience.

William Morris's story of Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary, who set his courtiers to work to help the vine-dressers, puts this fact in a very picturesque way; and as a result of the experiment it was found that for the first half-hour the courtiers worked forty-five minutes, the second half-hour just thirty minutes, the third half-hour fifteen minutes, and in the

fourth half-hour declined to two minutes, while the labourers maintained their steady rate.

There is a false estimate of the value and dignity of labour prevalent ; we need a new scale, a new gauge or test of the value and proportionate usefulness of labour. If, apart from bodily strength, so much skill, judgment, and experience is required in common everyday labours that have not the slightest pretensions to art, consider how many qualities are brought into play directly we touch any one of the finer handicrafts.

Machinery, used solely in the interests of trade and rapid production, has distorted our sense of the importance of labour as well as degraded the labourer, and wellnigh destroyed the handicraft, and has set up the quite false standard of mechanical precision, and what is known as "trade finish," which is fatal to any *artistic*, that is to say, individual feeling.

It appears, indeed, as if art were only possible in so far as the artist escapes the tendencies and influences of his time.

The very schools of art tend to mechanicalise and conventionalise students to one pattern. The only way to teach or to learn any form of art is by demonstration ; the master should be able to do the work, the pupil should be able to see it done. But the master-craftsman no longer, as a rule, works in his shop with his apprentices, passing on, with added skill and invention, those traditions of work and method, which, continually added to by fresh experience and new impulses, form the true soil out of which the vital force of design, in all its manifold branches, ever springs.

But now, I suppose, it is very seldom a workman sees his

work complete from beginning to end. He must be content to furnish a part only, perhaps an infinitesimal part, to the finished result. There can be no possibility under such a system of the pleasure of the craftsman in fashioning his work, to give it the individual twist and play of fancy, the little touch of grace and ornamental feeling springing from the organic necessities of the work which is characteristic of the times when art and handicraft were united and living.

I cannot contemplate with satisfaction the spectacle of a world so "civilised" that all the useful labours are made either terrible by long hours, or emptied of all joy and interest by being reduced to mechanism, so that every one, while spending mechanically the greater part of their time on some work they take no interest in, and caring only to end it, fix their heart upon something outside their lives and work—following the game of "ins and outs" called politics, or giving themselves up to the chances of the gambler, whose talk is of jockeys and racehorses, or stocks and shares.

The ideal man was, a little while ago, the so-called "self-made" man—the man who started from *somewhere* with half-a-crown in his pocket, and changed it cleverly (in course of time) for half a million or so, living happily ever after on the labour of others—an independent gentleman.

The miner or the navvy who digs himself out of his class and hoists himself on the shoulders of others to a position of mastership—to a position in which he is no longer obliged to do any work—has been held up to the admiration of all other miners and navvies, who are enjoined to go and do likewise.

But why should it be assumed that a man must rise out of his class in order to raise himself? Why should a life of useful productive labour, of labour absolutely indispensable to the community, be despised, and a life of idleness be extolled and desired?

The principle of perpetually shifting the hardest and most disagreeable work on to the shoulders of others, and then labelling those others as inferiors, and paying them miserably, *must come to an end some day*. The system under which a man who works hardest and longest is paid the least, while at the other end of the scale the man who does nothing is paid the most, is a scandal; and if this is the result of civilisation, civilisation, if it is going to stop at that, must be pronounced a failure.

No happy human life is surely possible without work—and by work I distinctly mean some form of pleasurable handicraft. No healthy human being would wish to be idle. Experience tells us how much happier we are, mentally and physically, for doing some kind of work, especially work, handiwork, in which we can take a pleasure; that is, which admits of some kind of invention, judgment, discretion, selection, which gives scope for individual preferences—art, in short.

And after all there is hardly any kind of manual work which (if not excessive and burdensome by means of long hours) does not bring its own satisfaction. To a healthy individual the mere putting out of his physical and mental forces is a satisfaction. The contention with difficulties, the triumph over obstacles, the solution of problems, the strife with the materials and forces of nature (if not too arduous) bring their own satisfactions and rewards.

I do not suppose any one who has never scrubbed a floor, or cleaned up and set a room in order, can understand the satisfaction of the good housewife who contemplates the result, putting the finishing touches here and there, just as an artist before his picture, retiring with his head on one side to judge of the effect.

It is noteworthy, too, that this sense of the worth of labour to the individual seems to be in danger of being entirely lost sight of amid the grinding overwork on the one hand, and the increasing luxury on the other.

In a society which makes it an object in life for each one to evade their share of useful productive labour, and by getting hold, by hook or by crook, of the largest share of labour values, to live upon the toil of their brothers and sisters, how can due respect be ever paid to labour, in spite of the bidding of the politician for the working man's vote, and all the various baits dangled before his eyes?

I have a little book called *The Book of Trades, or Library of the Useful Arts*, interesting as showing the state of the useful handicrafts on the verge of this century of machine production. It is in three parts, dated 1806 to 1811. Most of the plates are dated 1804. Little pictures are given of most of the trades described, and we see, for instance, in one part, with many other crafts, the trunkmaker, the wheelwright, the iron-founder, the copperplate printer, the painter, the statuary, side by side—no artificial distinction between art and labour here; but while it says of the wheelwright that a journeyman can earn "from a guinea to thirty shillings a week," of the painter it says,

"the earning of an artist cannot be defined; he is paid according to his talents, and to the celebrity which he has acquired. Some persons will require a hundred guineas for a piece which another of inferior merit, or little known to the public, would be glad to perform for a twentieth part of that sum." Our author is judicious.[1]

The *Book of Trades* winds up with "The Merchant," and after showing so many handicraftsmen in full activity, the artist is rather hard put to it to express the toil of the merchant, so he draws a fine gentleman in a cocked hat, leaning on his walking stick, and elegantly presiding over a docker who is rolling a barrel, and a clerk, in a rudimentary top hat, who is entering something in a book. Here is an image of art—or shall we say craft—and labour!

Well, I suppose the "merchant" of the present day is mostly a good many removes farther from his merchandise than that, and often does not ever see the thing he buys and sells, becoming ultimately sublimated into the banker—the great financier who pulls the strings, and supplies the sinews of war in the modern world. He is like the man who carries on several games of chess without seeing the board. It is an unpicturesque ideal which I do not admire. To be mere pieces and pawns in the game of a cunning and unseen power is a very demoralising and dangerous game, both for the pawns and the player, and the power of money seems less scrupulous and more demoralising in its action than any other sinister power which has held sway over humanity.

[1] It is curious to note, by the way, that terms then used in speaking of pictures and painting, such as "performing" and "piece," are now almost exclusively confined to another art—the drama.

While apparently fostering art it really blights and destroys it, caring only for luxury; and labour is degraded and despised under the commercial ideal of heaping up riches, according to possession of which is a citizen respected!

I have been described as a person "deeply tainted with socialism." I do not know how such an impression originated, as I thought that I was entirely gone that way long ago! But whether socialists or not, I think we must all feel that man has become what he is by the development of his social instincts, or the race would have become extinct, and therefore it is reasonable to look forward to the attainment of a higher and a juster and more human social life.

I believe that we cannot stand still, and I for one do not want to go back. Intensely interesting as the study of past ages may be, and many the lessons we may lay to heart from the past life and experience of humanity, the possibilities of the future are still more fascinating.

I for one am not satisfied with our present commercial democracy, which, indeed, I believe to be but a stage of evolution into something more real and complete. The aspiration for liberty, equality, and fraternity is a true aspiration, but it has yet to be realised. I cannot for the life of me see how you can have political freedom without *economic freedom*. If there is monopoly of land and the means of subsistence, there must be slavery in some form, as well as pauperism.

The world, however, cannot be changed by a ready-made, cut-and-dried working model of a scheme for the regeneration of society. I am not going to attempt the impertinence of offering

one. Society must work out its own salvation—no professional salvationist can save it that trouble. We all have our aspirations, however, our preferences, our ideas—dreams, if you will ; and it is after all the sum and velocity of these, incorporating the wants of the time, which ultimately form opinion, which dissolve states, and reform them.

I will confess, therefore, that I look to the reconstruction of society on a basis of equality of condition (quite a different thing from dividing up) to remedy the ills we suffer from. The problem of the future lies in a nutshell, but that nutshell is no less than *the organisation of labour*—a hard one to crack perhaps, but it will have to be done some day. The organisation of labour carries the question of art with it—carries every question with it. I can conceive it quite practicable for any community to declare that not one of its members shall want for food, clothes, shelter, or work ; and while placing no restrictions on individual development, so long as that development did not infringe the liberty of others, it might fix at least a minimum standard of life. It is conceivable on such a basis that the useful necessary work of the community might be carried on by a system of co-operation, by companies or orders, in which every able-bodied member of the community taking part, the number of working hours would be few and short, necessarily, since there would be no question of making a profit for any one, and for the same reason no work need be scamped or hurried, while ample leisure could be afforded for cultivation and enjoyment. If, in the *first* place, the world (each country) was regarded as a place for its people to live happily in, should we be likely to blacken it with smoke, or ruth-

lessly deface or destroy the beauty either of town or country when the fierce competition of trade no longer hounded us on ; when the hope of profits ceased from troubling and speculation was at rest?

Then, perhaps (instead of scratching holes here and there), we might do something towards really building up a noble and beautiful human life—a life of useful and pleasurable, but not enforced or excessive labour ; of labour gladdened by its recurring festivals, and closely allied with the invention and colour of art ; a life in which the individual might have free scope, and character its full weight (unbiassed by "real" property, and without its undue powers), yet with a paramount social sense of the unity of common life ; of the life of which we are each a part only, which was here before we came, and which will go on long after we are gone ; that life which absorbs, while it protects and leaves free the individual man and woman, humanising them by the sense of mutual love and dependence, while bracing them with the sense of public spirit and duty,—such a life, which, collectively speaking, is alone worthy to be called a free state.

ART AND HANDICRAFT

THE formation of guilds of workers in art, taken with other indications of a very decided movement towards a revival of handicraft and of design as associated with it, is one of the most notable signs of the times.

In the midst of the full tide of mechanical invention and unheard-of ingenuity in the adaptation of machinery, we come back to the *hand*, as the best piece of machinery after all.

It is a strange commentary upon that industrial commercial progress which has been the subject of so much congratulation. In the full swing of our commercial century, which has witnessed such a wonderful development of mechanical invention and application of steam power to every kind of process of production, involving the specialising of our workman, and his conversion very often into an appendage of the machine, we have discovered that we are losing our sense of beauty, our artistic feeling, and capacity for imaginative design ; that our daily work is losing, or has lost, its interest and romance ; that we are paying a heavy

price for this lob-sided progress of ours in the loss of beauty without and happiness within ; and that that very cheapening of commodities, which is often regarded as such a blessing, means the cheapening of human life and labour ; and we are apt to forget that the cheapest necessity of life may be dear enough if one has not even the cheap symbol of exchange for it—the uttermost farthing,—and the portion of the human family, of our fellow-citizens in this condition appears to be continually on the increase.

So that the glittering palace of commercial prosperity and individual profit-at-other-people's-expense casts a terrible shadow of ever-deepening blackness exactly proportional to the luxury, the waste, and the splendour within.

In the blackness of this shadow is involved the blight and desolation of many a fair tract of our green England, as well as the blight and desolation of the lives of her sons and daughters in the grime of overcrowded joyless cities.

And while at one end of the social scale we get the height of degradation which comes of the delegation of all manual labour to another class, with ultra-refinement and softness of living, and an aimless and restless life ; at the other end we get depths of degradation which comes not of work but of hopeless toil, or enforced idleness ; precarious and penurious living, and all the sordid and narrowing cares it entails,—like the mysterious flakes that Shelley describes in his "Triumph of Life," falling and falling upon the heads of the throng until the brightness of youth is changed to a sour-visaged old age.

Here, in these two perhaps equally deplorable extremes, we

have the white and the black upon our palette for a picture of modern life—a "Bridge of Life" I have not yet painted. These are the two negations. Between them there is a band or bridge of colour very various in hue, fading gradually into the white, or absorbed gradually into the blackness. Here is the artificial bridge of life we have built up with the rigid stones and bricks of an inhuman and unequal economic system, cemented by the lives and hopes of the mass of mankind, who are constrained to bear that bridge from dawn to sunset in order that a privileged few may pass over dry-shod—not unpursued, it is true, by their own Nemesis, if unvexed by the common cares that wear away the lives of those unregarded supporters of the present structure of society—the caryatides of toil turned to stone.

Well, this revival of handicraft, this claim of the workman to have some share of the joy of the artist in his work, instead of, like the blind tools and implements he uses, contributing to a result in which he has no acknowledged part or recognition,—this claim, I say, which is wrapped up in that revival of handicraft of which we see the signs around us, is, in some sort, a protest against the domination of our modern commercial and industrial system of production for profit—the profit of some intervening person other than the actual worker and maker—which has gradually superseded the ancient one of production for use, which has destroyed the old village industries, and is fast obliterating local varieties and characteristics of all kinds as regards the outward life of the people in all countries where our modern civilisation has obtained a footing.

Instead of things useful, each with their own constructive and

organic beauty, or decoration arising out of these, being produced at the will and pleasure of the artist or craftsman, with a view to the actual requirements of particular people, things both of use and so-called ornament are now, with few exceptions, with our tremendous machinery, produced wholesale—as many as possible to one pattern—whether hats, or boots, or clothes, or houses, or food and furniture, or furniture for the mind's unseen house—things intended to stimulate and delight it. Yet all these things, even matters, one would think, of pure art like books and pictures, instead of being the spontaneous outcome of a man's best thoughts and skill, seem too often made by a species of guess-work, and apparently on the assumption that, being made for no one, or no place, in particular, they will do anywhere, or fit any one, or every one, but sometimes end in suiting no one.

Now in order to facilitate this process of wholesale production for profit (which ultimately depends for its success perhaps as much upon the adroitness of the salesman as upon the actual wants of the big public, at least beyond the bare necessities)—in order to facilitate wholesale production, it becomes an object that all labour that *can be* done by machine, after almost infinitesimal subdivision has taken place, *shall be* done by machine, until such workmen as are necessary to wait on the machine become parts of it, and independent craftsmen cease to exist.

There may be a great future for machinery in the *real* saving of labour—heavy and exhausting labour—the necessary heavy and useful work—lifting weights, pumping, excavating, and carrying us from place to place, and many other useful services—perhaps when communities are masters of their own soil and the materials

of life; but at present it is only the cost of labour that is saved. It may be a gain to the owner and to a few individuals, but so long as machinery merely supplants men, and turns them adrift to swell the army of the unemployed, what is gain to individuals is a loss to the people at large.

If the production of the greatest saleable quantity for the greatest purchasing number, without regard to quality or durability, be the object, of course there can be little question that such a system as the present one is well adapted to attain it.

If mere *reproduction* of works on the same principle, even of works of art, is our object, rather than to encourage the development of the capacity for original invention, and the personal pleasure of fashioning, such a system is again well adapted to the end, as, for instance, in the case of printed books, newspapers, engravings, and all things where any form of press is employed. But for all our advancement and steam power as applied to the printing press, printing as an art has declined, however it may have flourished as a trade, especially as regards the form of type and its arrangement on the page, to say nothing of printers' ornaments and illustrations from the point of view of their contributing to the unity and decorative effect.

Yet this matter of book and newspaper illustration is considered by many, perhaps most, to be our strongest point. Well, if we limit it strictly to the question of illustration pure and simple, and leave out the question of adaptability to conditions and decorative effect—the art and craft side, in fact—there can be no doubt that, fostered perhaps by the enormous and wonderful development of the photograph, there is an extraordinary display

of clever work and graphic power of a kind scattered about among our books, newspapers, and magazines.

In fact, some of our most original and clever work is found in these things, and many of our most original painters first distinguished themselves as illustrators, and owe much of their character and charm as painters to the fact of their having been first craftsmen in black and white.

Yet in contemplating the amount of ability spent on works the very existence of which depends often upon the passing moment, it is impossible not to feel that there is an enormous waste in this direction, both literary and artistic.

It has been said that we grind our potential Shakespeares very small on the mill of the daily press; and in like manner, I suppose, our Michael Angelos may be squandered in magazines and Christmas numbers.

I believe it has been said that in our black and white illustrative work we find our "art of the people." It may be the modern substitute for it, but I should describe it more as the art of a commercial democracy. It is produced by a special class for special classes, rather than for or by the people, strictly speaking; and, curiously enough, though addressed to a wide public, its existence depends upon its swift conversion into private property. You pay your money and you take your choice.

As art, it is after all questionable compensation for that art of the people which formerly existed in every village, every household, in close connection with every handicraft, however humble; when every carpenter, mason, blacksmith, weaver, or plasterer

could give the touch of art to his work ; when every gable, every street, had character and beauty of its own, and every church was the shrine of the most beautiful art of the time—common to all who had eyes to see.

What, after all, becomes of this mass of illustrating and printing, hastily conceived and hurriedly carried out—these flying leaves, hot from the press, daily, hourly, weekly, monthly, falling upon a comparatively apathetic public, needing stronger and stronger sensational effects and newer novelties? Their days, indeed, are as grass, for as soon as the breath of popular favour and interest passeth over them they are gone, and the place thereof knoweth them no more.

There being so little beauty and variety or romance in the lives of most of us, and since the mind and the senses must be fed in some way or another, we try to make books and pictures fill the void. The demand increases, and an organised system of supply springs up to meet it, so that our poetry and romance, our sense of art and beauty, is ministered to in the way of business, and made up in large or small parcels, to be had in pounds' worths or penny-worths across the counter.

All this may be very admirable and convenient, but the most beautiful art is the natural outcome and expression of a rich, varied, heroic, and hopeful contemporary life, its character and beauty depending upon that life, and the unity of its sentiment, just as that of a tree or a flower depends upon the soil from which it springs. By our modern methods we are gradually impoverishing the soil while we are forcing the crops. We are obliterating the beauty of common life, at least in towns, while we are

endeavouring to increase and stimulate the production of works of art.

That, surely, is a ruinous system—most uneconomical economics! We shall never make both ends meet.

It is well for those who have leisure and inclination to face the question—whither our post-haste production for profit, whether in art or craft, is carrying us? The world after all is limited in extent, and the ordinary fundamental wants of man are limited also. Sooner or later it may come within the bounds of possibility to calculate almost to a nicety the demands of the world-market. That market is already crowded with competitors, and at the present rate the salesmen, or at least the goods, are too many for the market—too much for the margin of profit ever growing narrower. The result is a glut, a waste, a loss, and incalculable suffering to the producers. Is it possible to contemplate the eternal existence of such a blindfold system? Is it not within the bounds of probability that, when the people—the workers—men and women, really come to their own again, and really govern their own, a system of labour will be organised on a very different basis from that of the present, and on a principle as near as possible to that expressed in the motto: "*From* each according to his capacity, *to* each according to his needs"?

It is, at least, on such a belief, and a belief founded on the prospects of the inevitable ultimate break-down of the present system of production and exchange by its own failure to fit the conditions of life, that I base my best hopes both for art and humanity.

I have no wish to return to the fourteenth, or any other century, even if wishes were horses and could carry us back. The world moves slowly ; the centuries do their work. I fully recognise that our present conditions are the result of a long chain of evolution, and we are still evolving. The peoples of the world are being drawn closer together, and the interdependence of nations brings such an ideal as I have indicated for the first time in history into the region of possibility. All questions lead us on to, and are absorbed in, one great question—the organisation of labour. When that is solved in the interest of the community, instead of for the profit of individuals, we may look forward to a time when, released from the pressing burden of the anxiety for the means of living, each one, while in his own community, taking his share of the necessary work, having leisure and opportunity, may devote his ability, such as lies in him, or as he may develop, to the practice of art or craftsmanship ; the results of which would be, being followed for the pleasure of it, and in the pursuit of beauty or for the expression of thought, Art would be entirely unforced ; growing naturally out of the use of the materials, and adaptability to the constructive position, directed by creative thought.

When the highest good becomes truly the good of the community and the service of man—the root and basis of all morality—when instead of grudging and partial acknowledgment it becomes the mainspring of action ; and when, freed from narrowing and debasing superstitions, man's place in nature is understood ; when living a life which afforded equal opportunities to all, which, being more simple and natural, would favour the development

of the artistic sense, is it possible to doubt that we should see great and beautiful public works and monuments, the result of combined and sympathetic labours, expressing not only the joy of individual artists and craftsmen in the beauty of their work, but the collective spirit of the community, whose guiding principles would be equality of condition and individual freedom, controlled only by considerations of the common good and the fraternal relationship of mankind?

Well, that is something, to my mind, worth looking forward to. It may be a mere outline, but details can be filled in as we complete the design. Whether its realisation be far or near, the important thing for every one, it appears to me, is *to have an ideal* of some kind. It is of the greatest practical value in life, continually stimulating us to fresh effort; producing wholesome discontent with existing conditions, and filling the mind with aspirations for something better, and the determination to work for it, however infinitesimally each may help to attain it.

We know what it is in our work to have an aim—what a difference it makes, if we are carving a piece of wood, or hammering a piece of metal, if we are seeking to express some particular beauty of line or surface, which all the while dwells in our mind; which we strive to satisfy, but which, whether we succeed or fail, continually leads us to higher and better efforts. It is our aim that makes all the difference in the conduct of art as of life.

It is this, too, which finally settles all questions of style or method, of high art or low, over and above the material we work in, which no artist or craftsman can afford to leave out of account. There is a saying attributed to Goethe, I believe, that the true

power of an artist is shown when he works under limitations; and most true it is,—applicable to all art, but especially in association with handicraft, for the whole art of the craftsman lies in his power of working under conditions; and he shows his skill in applying design, and expressing it in different materials in such a way as best to bring out the peculiar beauty and adaptability of those materials, and the fitness of the design to them; by no means endeavouring to imitate in one material what can only properly be done in another, or joining in that aimless masquerade in which the arts lose their identity and character together.

In the midst of decay and dissolution there are signs of new life and movement—the awakening of spring among the dead boughs of winter, the budding of the new shoots from among the faded and fallen leaves. These efforts to revive the handicrafts, to unite the scattered and estranged members of the family of the arts, are full of good augury. Not that such movements alone can solve the questions on which I have touched, except, perhaps, for individuals here and there; but the effort to return to better ways in one direction is sure to lead us on to search out juster ways in another; and in our realisation of the unity of art we may discover the secret of the unity of life, if, indeed, the first is possible before the last.

In the meantime the formation of guilds of workers in art and handicraft must tend to foster the sense of fellowship, sympathy, and co-operation, from the loss of which art and artists have suffered so much. We shall discover by our trials and exercises in various handicrafts what real pleasure and interest can be associated with work; how impossible, indeed,

is a healthy existence without interesting work of some kind; and even what is called the drudgery of it—those preparatory stages in work, with the ultimate end in view, become interesting, and fall into their place as a proper part and necessary means to the attainment of that end, and even, perhaps, not unwelcome incidents in the day's work.

I feel sure we can afford to despise no manner of manual labour, skilled or unskilled. The simplest operation requires some kind of intelligence and adaptability. The stone-breaker on the road will tell you that you have to find out "where to hit them," —not that any man ought to be condemned to stone-breaking all his life, however. The human frame is the most adaptable thing in nature (as well as in design); its beauty is owing to its adaptability, and depends for its freedom of movement and command of limb upon constant exercise. I see no beauty or desirability in the contemplation of a society divided into two parts—brains and hands—even were it possible, for neither can work well without the other. We must overthrow that false, false notion that work is degrading, and that it must be the object and mark of all superior persons to shift the burden of all manual and useful labour on to the shoulders of a class; that it is at all a creditable thing to be "of no occupation," or that impossible being "an independent gentleman."

Here is where we have gone wrong, and there will have to be some considerable changes in the ideals as well as in the realities of existing society before things can be got straight again.

THE PROSPECTS OF ART UNDER SOCIALISM

FOR the sake of clearness I will commit myself to a definition : firstly of art, which, so far as its meaning can be packed up into the portmanteau of a sentence, might be described as *a form of vital force applied to the expression of Beauty*. This will at any rate sufficiently indicate the point of view from which I regard it. As to socialism I know no better or more portable definition than that of Mr. Belfort Bax, namely, that socialism is *a new view of life upon an economic basis*.

Under the present system of commercial competition every opportunity which seems to afford a chance of gaining a livelihood or a hope of gain stimulates people to activity in all manner of ways. But it is an unwholesome stimulus, especially in its effect upon art and artists ; and, as a result, the market is flooded with every kind of catch-penny abomination — pictures or so-called ornaments, and objects of art which could have brought no joy to the maker of them, and can bring no real or lasting pleasure to the user, for whom, perhaps, they but fit the whim of the moment,

or are only bought because of the persuasive eloquence of some adroit salesman (under the aforesaid stimulus of gain); and for no better reason than that such things are in fashion.

Now, naturally, there is this characteristic about genuine spontaneous art, that its creation is a pleasurable exercise and excitement. The artist is always anxious to give out what he has—to offer his best to the sight of all men; and so far he is naturally socialistic. Indeed, art itself is essentially a social product, intimately associated with common life, and depending for its vitality upon a co-operation of all workers, upon living traditions and quick and universal sympathies. These are its sunlight and air.

Where the love of art is sincere, given the capacity, all a man would ask would be security of livelihood, with a fair standard of comfort and refinement, and materials to work with. For the rest it would be simply a pleasurable thing to exercise his creative powers for the benefit of the community and the praise he might win.

It would seem, too, that humanity under any system cannot do without art in some form or another, and is always ready to welcome and reward the artist who has the skill to interpret nature, or beautify and refine the life of every day. But no artist, in so far as he is worthy of the name, works consciously for the sake of reward, other than the sympathy and praise of his contemporaries. Modern commercialism does its best to turn him into a man of business, but that was not his natural destiny. Originally one with the constructive workman—the builder, the smith, the carver, the weaver, the potter—he put the touch of art on his work, the refining play of line and pattern, and he saw that it was good, with the pleasure and delight of a craftsman. So use

and beauty were one in the old simple days. But we have changed all that. We have put use in one pigeon-hole and beauty in another, and it is only by accident that they get mixed.

Now the severance of the artist and the workman—the craftsman—and the dismemberment, and absorption of the latter to a large extent by machinery, have had results incalculably injurious to art, whatever service they may have been in other ways. As to machinery, it is but a question of adaptation of means to ends, since machinery simply gives extra hands and feet to humanity; useful enough to do heavy and useful drudgery, and works of necessity in a hurry—feed, clothe, and warm, pump and lift weights, for instance—to be the servant and labour-saver of man, in short, but never his master and profit-grinder, as it has become, and certainly never intended to take pleasurable art-work out of his hands, or speciously simulate the workmanship of those hands, and take, with its variety, its interest and beauty away.

It is a curious thing that while every day we are extending our railways and pushing our commerce, making travel easier, and opening up unknown countries to what we are pleased to call the advantages of civilisation,—while we are facilitating methods of getting about on the one hand or the other, we are obliterating those interesting varieties and local distinctions which make travel chiefly interesting; so that while we increase our facilities of travel we remove its inducements as fast as we can—at least from the art point of view.

One of those things the disappearance whereof we deplore is the art of the people—the peasant costume with its embroidery and jewellery, always so full of character and colour, relics of long

antiquity and tradition, the odds and ends of which are carefully scraped together and served up to the tourist long after they have ceased to be realities in the life of the people. This native art, found in all unexploited countries, is highly interesting, as showing how naturally a people collectively express their sense of beauty in colour and form, how naturally, with leisure and fairly easy conditions of life, the art instinct asserts itself.

It is on the unquenchable spontaneity of this instinct that I should rely to give new birth to new forms of art, even were all types and conditions of the art of the past destroyed.

After a course of examination at South Kensington of vast multitudes of designs in any and every style under the sun, I could almost bear such a catastrophe with equanimity, since no aspiring designer could then crib Persian or Chinese, mediæval or Greek patterns, spoil them in the translation, and serve them up as original designs.

All the learning and archæology in the world will not fill us with an instinct for art, since art (to recur to our definition), being a form of vital force, must spring from life itself. It depends on realities, and draws its best inspiration from everyday existence. It is bound to reflect the character of that life, and in so doing gives the history of the people and the spirit of the age of which it is the outcome. We have only to consider how much of our knowledge of past ages and races we owe to the relics of ancient art which have been preserved to us; and this brings us to the consideration of another aspect of the importance of art to a community, and one not likely to be overlooked under socialistic conditions—I mean its educational value.

At present I think this is very much neglected. While we crowd our galleries and exhibitions with masses and masses of pictures every year, our public halls and the walls of our schools are left blank for the most part. This seems to suggest that we are thinking more of our shop-windows than of the windows of our minds—especially those of the rising generation. But why should not the capacity of children for receiving ideas through the eye be taken advantage of? Why should not the walls of our schools be pictured with the drama of history? Why should they not be made eloquent with the wonders of the earth by true and emphatic drawings of the life and character of different countries and peoples?

It has been said that the worst drawing conveys a more definite idea of a thing than the best description. Bringing it down, therefore, even to the plainest utilitarian level, the importance of drawing is obvious enough. A socialistic society would, however, not be likely to gauge its value by so narrow a standard, and when the object of education was recognised as the development of the faculties of the individual, with a view to the service of the community and reasonable enjoyment of life, as distinct from the specialising them for a competitive commercial existence, art would surely be recognised as a most important factor in that result and accorded due place.

The greatest works of art have always been public works, whether we think of the temples and statues of classical antiquity, or the cathedrals and churches of the Middle Ages. In the past art has been devoted to the service of religion, whether pagan or Christian. The wealth lavished on churches and pictures and

tombs by princes and popes was spent for the most part, at least, on works that all might see and admire ; and the fact of this larger appeal of art, and that it has the expression of the deeper feelings and higher aspirations of humanity, increased its dignity, interest, and beauty.

Nowadays artists, as a rule, work for rich men, and devote their talents to beautifying strictly private interiors with every kind of luxury and splendour : working for individual whims and pleasures, however, cannot be as inspiring as working for the community—for the time, for the people—and the feeling that the artist may express its true mind and heart.

Unity of religious belief and sentiment now no longer exists, and art no longer attempts to act as its interpreter. Painters are content to be the familiar illustrators of ordinary life and passing fashion, or the recorders of the superficial facts and phases of nature, and care not for symbolic imagery or ideals. Architecture and applied art, generally speaking, are devoted to the comfort or glorification of well-to-do individuals, or to serve the ends and purposes of trade.

In an epoch when personal comfort and private property seem to be the main objects of existence, at the price of the absence of both at the other end of the scale, this is not surprising, since art is bound to reflect the character of its age.

Now socialism presents a new ideal to humanity. It is a religion and a moral code as well as an economic system. Its true realisation would mean again that unity of public sentiment, but in a far higher degree, and the sympathy of a common humanity freed from the domination of class and the grinding conditions of

commercial competition. Such an atmosphere could not but be favourable to art in the highest degree.

Not only would the common property in the beauty of nature not be allowed to be disfigured for the purposes of private gain, but with leisure and security of living it would not be a question, as it is now so often, with the artist or craftsman, hindered, in pursuing his higher aims, and in seeking perfection in his craft, by the cramping consideration that it will not pay.

And what is true of art work is, after all, true of all work. A profit-grinding system must of necessity be against the production of the best in all ways.

Greater simplicity and dignity of life, too, which would naturally result from a juster distribution of wealth, would have its effect on both art and architecture, and would find expression in simpler and sincerer forms of construction and ornament.

If we imagine a truly socialised community—a state of equal condition (not necessarily of mental capacity or other quality) wherein every able-bodied member served the community according to their capacity, it might necessitate a portion of time (determined by the numbers of the community and their necessities) being spent in some form of manual labour. This in itself would be an advantage and physical benefit to each individual; nor so long as enough leisure was secured would mental capacity be likely to suffer, in its true sense, or the art instinct or capacity either—on the contrary. There is nothing, after all, like close intimacy with nature and fact to strengthen the character all round, and clear the mental vision of morbid states; and as for art, like the wrestler, it

always gains new vigour every time it touches the ground—the ground of nature and common life.

If your artist would depict the life about him—the drama of men and women—he will be all the stronger if he has mixed with the actors. If he would give man in all his labours and actions, it is good that he should understand those actions and labours —that he should be able himself to ride, swim, row, or drive the plough, and wield the scythe or spade. He would be a stronger man and a better artist: for it is as much what we *know* and *feel* as what we *see* that comes into our work in art. Would he be an artist in any of the handicrafts, let him first be a smith or a carpenter, let him understand the material he would work with, and its capacities; for it is from the workshop that all good traditions in applied design must come.

I have spoken of probabilities and possibilities, and of necessity both enter largely into the consideration of my subject as of any thought of the future construction and condition of society.

Now, while I have the best hopes for art, I do not think it probable that under socialism any one will get labour-values to the extent of £70,000 for a picture, but it would nevertheless be quite possible to get a Raphael.

The type of artist—supposing artists existed as a class or order in a socialist community—most likely to be fostered would, I think, be probably such as that represented by the master craftsmen of the Middle Ages, such as Albert Dürer or Holbein, for instance—men capable of design in all kinds of materials, who could design a building, make the pattern of a jewel or a gown, draw a title-page or paint a portrait. What may be called, in

short, the all-round artist would be likely to be more in demand than the specialist more or less fostered under present conditions.

The essence of art is harmony and unity. We have seen how art depends upon life, and is affected by and reflects its character and conditions. Before we can hope to get harmonious art and thought, therefore, we must realise harmony and unity in life.

For myself I am confident, in view of these considerations, that what is good for humanity is good for art. Take care of the pence of healthy life,—the current coin of individual freedom, of political and social equality, of the fraternity of human service and common interests,—and the gold pieces of art, thought, and creative beauty will take care of themselves.

ON THE TEACHING OF ART

THE teaching of Art! Well, to begin with, you cannot teach it. You can teach certain methods of drawing and painting, carving, modelling, construction, and what not—you can teach the words, but you cannot give the power of expression in the language.

Of course a man's ideas on the subject of teaching necessarily depend upon his general views of the purport and scope of art. Is it (1) a mere imitative impulse, a record of the superficial facts of nature in a particular medium? or is it (2) the most subtle and expressive of languages, taking all manner of rich and varied forms in all sorts of materials under the paramount impulse of the search for beauty?

Naturally, our answer to the question, What should be taught, and how to teach it, depends upon our answer to this question. But the greater includes the less, and though one may be biassed by the final definition, as above, it does not follow that the first-named may not have their due place in a course of study.

The question, then, really is, What is the most helpful course of study towards the attainment of that desirable facility and cultivation of the feeling and judgment in the use of those elements and materials towards their ultimate expression of beauty?

And here we have to stop again on our road and ask, What is this quality of beauty, and whence does it come? Without exactly attempting a final or philosophical account of it, we may call it an outcome and efflorescence of human life and energy under happy conditions. It is found in varying degree, and the development of the sensibility to impressions of beauty follows much the same course and stages as those of the senses and the intellect themselves—of the development of man, in short, as a social and reflective animal. As one cannot see colour without light, neither can we expect sensibility to beauty to grow up naturally amid sordid and dull surroundings.

To begin with, then, before we can have this impulse and sensibility towards beauty, it is necessary to create an atmosphere of beauty,—a condition of life where it comes naturally with the colours of dawn and sunset; where it has not to struggle as for very life, as it were, for every breath it draws, or ask itself the why and wherefore of its existence.

Nor is beauty an independent and unrelated quality, but is the result, as we find it in its various manifestations in art, of long ages of growth and co-operative tradition and sympathy.

Seeking beautiful art, organic and related in all its branches, we turn naturally to places and periods of history which are the culminating points in such a growth—to Athens in the Phidian age, to England or France in the mediæval age, to Florence or

Venice in the early Renaissance, for instance, rather than to modern London or Paris. Or even limiting ourselves to our own day, we have got to expect far more from the man who has worked from his youth up in an atmosphere of art, even if it is only that of the modern painting studio, than from one of our artisans, trained to some one special function, perhaps, in a process of manufacture, and whose daily vision is bounded by chimney-pots and back-yards.

A pinch of the salt of art and culture, at measured intervals, will never counteract the adverse influence of the daily, hourly surroundings on the eye and the mind. It is useless if one hour of life says "yes," if all the others say "no" continually.

Our first requirement, then, is a sympathetic, or at least suggestive atmosphere—which means practically a reasonable human life, with fair play for the ideas and senses through the drama of the eye. It ought to be within the reach of all of us, whereas as a matter of fact it is hardly possible for any under the present economic system.

Granting our first condition would go a long way towards solving the next problem—what to teach, for we should then find that art was not separable from life.

Children are never at a loss what to learn or what to teach themselves when they see any manner of interesting work going on. They gather at the door of the village blacksmith, or at the easel of the wayside painter. Demonstration is the one thing needed, primarily. Demonstration, demonstration, always demonstration. This is perhaps at the bottom of the recent strong determination to French methods on

the part of our younger painters. You can learn this part of the painting business because you can see it done. You could learn any craft if you saw it done. But it does not follow that there is no painting but impressionism—with M. Monet as its prophet.

Not that I would undervalue any sincere and genuine impulse; only the cultivation of this kind of painting exclusively—that is, the presentment of aspect—specialises a man and differentiates the painter more and more from other artists; and the concentration of public interest on this form of art draws away talent from the other most important branches.

It might be said almost that the modern cabinet or competitive gallery picture, unrelated to anything but itself (and not always that), has destroyed painting as an art of design.

I would therefore rather begin with the constructive side of art. Let a student begin by some knowledge of architectural construction and form. Let him thoroughly understand—both historic and artistic—the connection between art and architecture. Let him become thoroughly imbued with a sense of the essential unity of art, and not, as is now so often the case, be taught to practise some particular technical trick, or be led to suppose that the whole object of his studies is to draw or paint any or every object from the pictorial point of view exclusively. Let the two sides of art be clearly and emphatically put before him—that of Aspect and Adaptation. Let him see that it is one thing to be able to make an accurate presentment of a figure, or any object in its proper light and shade and relief, in relation to its background and surroundings, and quite another to give expression to outline, or to make them into organic pieces of decoration to fit a given

space. Then, again, he should perceive how the various media and materials of workmanship naturally determine the character and treatment of his design, while leaving large individual range.

A course of study from this point of view would tend to bring home to the student the wholesome dictum of Goethe, "Art is art, precisely because it is not nature," even if his very first study failed to convince him of its truth.

The formative capacity and constructive sense may exist in a high degree, without any corresponding power of drawing in the pictorial sense; and considerable proficiency in simpler forms of various handicrafts, such as modelling, wood-carving, and *repoussée* work, is possible of attainment by quite young people, whereas the perception of certain subtleties in pictorial methods of representation, such as the perspectives, planes, and values, delicacy of modelling, and the highly selective sense which deals with them, is a matter of matured mental capacity, as well as technical experience and practical skill. So that there are natural reasons for a primary training in some forms of handicraft, which, while affording the same scope for artistic feeling, present simpler problems in design and workmanship, and give a tangible foundation from which to start.

In thus giving, in a course of study in art, the first place to architecture and the allied decorative arts, we are only following the historic order of their progress and development. When the arts of the Middle Ages culminated in the work of the great painters of the Renaissance, their work showed how much more than makers of easel pictures they were—architects, decorators, jewellers, calligraphers, embroiderers; so that a picture, apart from

its central interest and purpose, was often an illustrated history of contemporary design in such things.

Now, my conclusion is that whereas a purely pictorial training or such a training as is now given with that view, while it often fails to be of much service in enabling a student to paint a picture, quite unfits him for other fields of art quite as important, and leaves him before the simplest problem of design helpless and ignorant ; while a training in applied design, or merely in drawing and colouring with that view, and all the forethought and ingenuity it calls forth, would be a good practical education in itself, would be a good preparation for pictorial studies, should the student ultimately devote himself to them.

I should therefore endeavour to teach relatively—to teach everything in relation not only to itself, but to surroundings—designating in relation to its materials and objects—the drawing of form in relation to other forms.

The ordinary ways of teaching drawing, say from the human figure—the Alpha and Omega of all study in art—do not show themselves sufficiently alive to the help that may be gained by comparative anatomy. Study the figure not only in itself, but in relation to the forms of other animals, and draw the analogous parts and structures—bones, joints, muscles—side by side, not only from the comparative anatomist's point of view, but the artist's. Study them in life and in action also.

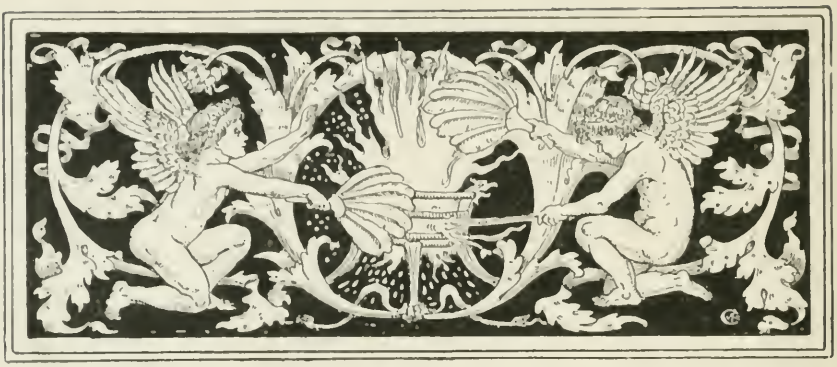
We have recently been told that artists have been fools since the world began in relation to depicting the action of animals ; but it was by a gentleman who did not appear to have distinguished between moments of arrested action and the action which is the

sum of those moments. Instantaneous photographs of animals in action tell you whereabouts their legs are at a given moment, but it is only when they are put in a consecutive series and turned on a wheel before the eye that they represent action. This is illusion, not art. Now the artist has to represent or to suggest action without actual movement of any kind, and he has generally succeeded, not by arresting the action of the moment, but by giving the sum of consecutive moments, much as the wheel does, but without the illusory trick. His business is to represent, not to imitate.

Art, after all, is not science. Until we all go about with photographic lenses with dry plates in them instead of eyes, we shall, I fear, still be interested in what artists have to say to us about nature and their own minds, whether instantaneous impressions or not.

This is only one of the many questions which rise up at every step, and I know of no system of teaching which adequately deals with them. No doubt our systems of teaching, or attempting to teach, art want overhauling like other systems; and when we are overhauling the system of life itself, it is not wonderful.

I do not, of course, believe in any cast-iron system of education from any point of view. It must be varied according to the individual. It must be made personal and interesting, or it is of little good; and no system, however good, will manufacture artists in anything, any more than the most brilliant talents will do away with the necessity of passionate devotion to work, careful thought, close observation, and constant practice, which produces that rapid and intimate sympathy of eye and hand, and makes them the responsive and fluent interpreters of that selective and imaginative impulse which results in art.



DESIGN IN RELATION TO USE AND MATERIAL

THE fundamental importance of design, and its claims to consideration, will hardly be disputed, particularly at a time when the advancement of art in its application or relation to industry is so much sought for. There is not a single thing we use but involves this primal necessity of design in some degree, which has not demanded some exercise of human thought, some measure of ingenuity, some kind of plan, to fit it for its purpose, or to commend itself to our sense of beauty. And here it may be said, although art in this sense is generally termed "applied art," strictly speaking, all forms of art, properly understood, come under this head, and that there is no such thing as *un*applied art—or, if there is, we may say then it is not art at all.

The gist of the whole matter lies in this application. Design in all its forms is governed by the relative spirit. In making a design, even of the simplest kind, important considerations and questions immediately arise—questions of *scale*, of *treatment*, of

material, of *position*, of *use*, which finally decide its character ; and in the solution of such questions lie at once the business and the success of the designer and craftsman.

Now the first of these considerations is SCALE. This is determined by the size of the object or surface we deal with, its use, and its relation to its surroundings : as the relation of the axe-head to its handle, the unit of a pattern, the height and proportions of a chair — what, in short, we may call architectural considerations. Fitness of scale is of course primarily determined in relation to the scale and proportions of man himself, who is naturally the standard and measure by which all work for the use and pleasure of humanity is finally checked. You would not, for instance, carve colossal heads on chair backs ; or, on the other hand, try to make a chimney-pot look like a miniature cathedral spire ! These, of course, are extreme instances.

There is a certain natural logic and common sense of proportion which keeps us tolerably straight in these matters, while it allows a sufficiently indefinite margin for individual taste and variety of character.

There exist obvious reasons, as well as natural feeling, in favour of decoration intended to be near the eye, or upon objects to be handled or used, being small in scale and finely worked ; and though, in that perpetual readjustment and inventive adaptation in the control of the designer there is always scope for variety, behind all he is conscious of the pressure of relative considerations—of natural law, in fact.

Then we come to the great question of TREATMENT, in which

lies folded, as it were, like the flower in the bud, the very virtue and essence of art.

To begin with, the designer, in the application of his art to material and use, has to put away from him the allurements of imitative naturalism, except in so far as they can be made to contribute and be subordinated to the effect and purpose of his work as a whole. He soon perceives the natural cleavage between nature and art—between the accidental picturesqueness of confused detail, broken surface-lights, and shadows, and definite, selected, related, and expressive forms and lines. He may be likened to a child with a handful of wooden letters out of which he has to construct words and sentences. Nature and the history of art is the vast encyclopædia of fact and form and phase out of which the poet and the artist have to choose the materials for their work.

A painter pure and simple is, of course, much less restricted, much less weighted with relative considerations, than the designer, and is at liberty, governed only by the necessary internal relation of his work, to avail himself of effects beyond the scope of the maker of tapestries or mosaics, the painter of glass, or the carver. Yet, curiously enough, in our industrial century the influence of the easel-picture painter has been paramount. He has ridden (I will not say in triumph) over our household furniture, he has trampled on our hearthrugs and carpets, he has left his impress on our napery and antimacassars; his influence, in fact, can be traced from our faience to our fish-slice; and this perhaps because, owing chiefly to industrial and economic conditions, the term art and artist came to be limited to pictorial work and its producer,—

since the modern easel-picture painter was until lately the only form of craftsman working independently, and with anything like complete control of his own work.

We are recovering, however, I think. We are realising the difference between pictorial and decorative art, between *imitative* and *constructive* design. It will do us no harm, as a corrective to our pictorial excesses, to draw the line very sharply between the two,—to put, metaphorically, the decorative sheep on the one hand, and the pictorial goats on the other. For we must remember there are two sides to art, with distinct aims. They may be characterised as "*aspect*" and "*adaptation*": the one seeking rather to imitate planes and surfaces, accidental lighting, phases and effects; the other constructive, depending on its beauty, on qualities of line and form and tint, unaffected by accidental conditions, seeking typical rather than individual forms, and ornamental rather than realistic results.

The first necessity in designing is Definition. Hence Line is all-important. Let the designer, therefore, in the adaptation of his art, lean upon the staff of *line*,—line determinative, line emphatic, line delicate, line expressive, line controlling and uniting. It cannot lead him wrong; it will never deceive him. He will always know where he is weak, and where he is indecisive, where he has hesitated, and where he has been confident. It will be the solid framing of his structure—the bones and marrow of his composition.

In line alone, having regard to all its different degrees of tenuity, the designer possesses a means of expression of considerable force and sympathetic range. It lends itself to the most

sensitive and delicate definition in a fine pen, pencil, or silver-point drawing, and it is capable of the utmost strength and architectural solidity, as in the emphatic outlines necessary to express the pattern and bring out the qualities of the material in large mosaic decorations and stained glass ; where, too, other considerations come in, as the tesseræ (Fig. 2) of the one, and the lead lines (Fig. 1) and colour scheme in the other.

Fig. 1.

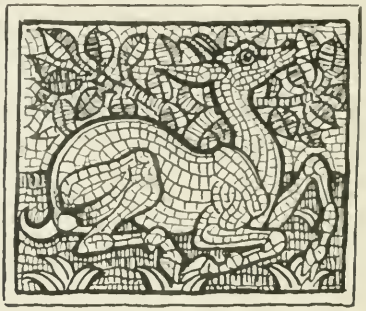


Fig. 2.

And here we come to another essential element in designing : we cannot touch what may be called the exigencies of particular materials, or begin to define our cartoon or pattern in line without perceiving the necessity of proceeding upon some kind of system in the treatment of form and detail.

In purely pictorial work, of course, this is not felt to the same degree, though the necessity *is* present even there, since we cannot work with Nature's own materials. We cannot dip our brush in liquid sunshine on the one hand, or have the blackness of night upon our palette on the other. We have not her greens or her reds, and gold and blue, in our boxes ; we cannot command the

full colours of the sunset or the dawn; so that with the most uncompromising realist the result is after all a compromise, a question of translation, adjustment to a scale, and more or less figurative expression. The same as regards minuteness of detail. Do we paint for the eye at such and such a distance, the photographic lens, or the microscope? A little nearer or a little farther, and all the conditions are changed. The fact is, as I have said, *all* art is conditioned; it is only a question of degree, and it is the successful demonstration and determination of these degrees which mark the difference between one kind of art and another, between one artist and another.

There is of course no absolute determination of rules for all cases. There is nothing absolute in art. *Art is not science.* The way is perpetually open for new experiments, for new expositions, and new adaptations and applications, which makes the pursuit of art in all its forms so peculiarly fascinating, and ever fresh and inspiring.

But to return to the question of System. Now supposing we wanted to make a pattern of a rose for a wall-paper. We might pick one from our garden (if we had one, as indeed every designer ought to have) and sketch it exactly as we found it—a portrait, as near as we could make it, of an individual rose with all its accidental characteristics. Well, we might make an interesting study, certainly, but when we came to apply it we should perceive that it made, however good as a study, a very poor pattern, and its virtue and interest as a drawing would be at once destroyed directly our pictorial rose was repeated—which we should be driven to do. We should practically get the repetition of a more or less shapeless

blot, a *formal* and *regular repetition* of an *informal and naturalistic drawing*—a contradiction in terms, in fact. Yet it is a thing that has been attempted over and over again. A sentimental public perhaps likes roses, in season and out of season, and considers perhaps that a rose in any material would, if not smell, at least look as sweet. It may be so, but if it be not sweet and clear in line and disposition, and organic as a pattern, its sweetness is wasted on the desert air of false art and taste and failure in decoration.

Therefore it is that the designer, having regard to the conditions of ornamental effect and relation to use and material, proceeds in a very different way. He finds that a certain formalism is an essential condition of his work, seeing that his aim is to adorn a space pleasantly, to construct a pattern that will bear repetition, or rather demand it, as another essential condition of its existence. He finds therefore that typical and abstract forms are of more value for the purpose than accidental ones; that suggestion is better in decoration than naturalistic or pictorial imitation. He would naturally, in taking a rose as his theme, recur to the primitive and fundamental type—to the simple flower as we see it on the parent stem of the wild rose of our hedges (Fig. 3). With such a type as this he could safely make a diaper or simple sprigged arrangement which would be satisfactory as far as it went (Fig. 4).

Nor, let it be observed, is the designer, in following such principles, departing from nature necessarily. Nay, in his way he may be expressing as much natural truth even as the pictorial artist: as we have seen that truth of aspect is one thing, and truth

of construction and detail another; while in following the necessities of adaptation to use and material the designer is only carrying out in the region of art the great principle of Nature herself, which

Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

rules through all forms of life,—that necessity of adaptation to conditions, which, as we have learned, has led to the endless variety of development in both plant and animal form that we see on every side.

The necessity of plan in designing next makes itself felt, and is of course very important, and capable of almost any degree of extension and complexity, although designs for extension on walls or hangings generally fall into recognisable classes with different variations. Starting with our diaper, square or diagonal, which may be considered the simplest, we may build our pattern upon a great variety of foundations (Fig. 5). But we shall find it necessary to build upon *some* plan, as a plan is as essential to a pattern as the skeleton to the human figure, though you may eventually conceal it as much as the skeleton is concealed by the human form, or more, by superadded enrichment, detail, and

intricacy. How far to go in this way the nature of the material and its uses will generally decide.

As to colour treatment, again, the best decorative effect does not demand the use of heavy shading or relief. The colours should be pure and fair, and the true local colours of all things should be sought, unaffected by accidental lights and shadows, as if we saw everything in an evenly diffused or flat light.

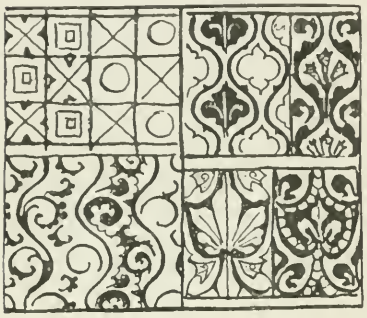


Fig. 5.

In modelling, or any treatment where the means of expression and ornamental effect is by relief, of course the question is different, though here again the gist of the matter lies in treatment, and there is all the difference in the world between one treatment and another.

Now of course the strictest observance of such principles in designing as I have indicated will not necessarily ensure an interesting pattern, though they would suffice to produce a workable one. Other considerations come in as we advance. Plan involves the consideration of the proportion and relation of our masses, and beauty of silhouette. Draw a figure with a big head, and it at once looks ridiculous (this seems so taken for granted by the many, that comic draughtsmen have subsisted upon it for years), while with a head of the natural proportion it may have grace and dignity. The same principle holds good in ornamental designing, and a beautiful result very largely depends upon a due

recognition of the importance of proportions. It does not follow that these proportions are those of nature, as in a naturalistic picture. In a decorative design, to serve our ornamental purpose, one may depart widely from them, as in the relative size of trees and figures and flowers and animals, etc., where there is no approach to naturalistic representation, as in designs for textiles and other things.

Fig. 6.

The important thing to preserve is the relation of masses, the organic and necessary connection arising out of the constructive necessities. In pattern work *three proportions* are generally felt desirable. You cannot jump at a bound from large to small, therefore an intermediate scale is useful, as in the illustration (Fig. 6). The masses of the tree and the pot are combined by the forms of the birds, and further, by the thin stems and leaves behind.

Fig. 7.

Silhouette, again, is a very important consideration in designing. It is a very good practice to block out one's design in silhouette in the first instance, as this will afford the best test of the relations and proportions of its masses possible, and of its variety. One does not seek to arrange a figure exactly symmetrically (as at A, Fig. 7), except under very formal condi-

tions. That at B is felt to be a more agreeable treatment. The more variety in contour, the more beauty we get.

The best practice in effective and ornamental use of silhouette is to be found in designing patterns for stencilling, where everything depends upon it. You block out a pattern in flat colour—light on dark, or dark on light—in such a way that it is capable of being cut out of a sheet of card or zinc without breaking, so that by painting over the perforated part, which is the pattern, it is transferred to any ground you desire. Fig. 8 shows two sketches of stencil patterns; the halves to repeat.

Fig. 8.

Another important consideration in designing is the adequate filling of the space for which your design is intended.

Now here again pictorial proclivities have been very misleading. They have led us, in illustrating books for instance, to that inorganic way of loosely vignetting a subject—splashing a landscape upon or across a page without regard to its mechanical conditions, and ignoring its necessary relation to the type. Instances of this kind of treatment are to be found notably in our illustrated magazines of Continental or American origin, which have been setting the fashion in so-called page decoration of late years. But this inorganic, unrelated kind of designing has not confined itself to books. You may find it anywhere and everywhere almost,—dabbed upon fans, dragged across

cupboard doors, and generally upset over the unconsidered trifles of everyday life.

I am afraid, too, that something is traceable to Japanese influence. But it does not at all follow that, because a Japanese artist, with his wonderful knowledge of nature and precision of touch, can throw a flowering branch, or bird, or a fish across a sheet of paper, or a panel, with such consummate skill as to delude us into the belief that he has decorated the space, therefore any one, with very inferior powers of draughtsmanship, can go and do likewise with equal *éclat*. It is somewhat like attempting tight-rope dancing before one can walk properly on the ground.

The truth is that all the solid and determinative motives in design are traceable to the influence of architectural style. In the absence of a living style in architecture, the arts of design, which are really its offspring, languish, and lose at once their fitness, monumental dignity, and importance.

For style is strictly the sum of considerations like the foregoing—with individual feeling superadded. It is the quality which collects and concentrates, as it were, the virtue and essence of the past, and fuses it with the present. It consists in that highly selective impulse or instinct which gives an artist's work its own peculiar and distinctive character, without isolating him or disconnecting him from the work that has gone before, or the work of his own day, so that a great design is in fact a link, or a luminous point or jewel, in a long golden chain, and necessarily dependent upon its continuity.

Style, of course, is a very different thing from what are known as "styles." It is the difference between the quick and the dead.

We can get decorations "in any style" nowadays to order. We can be Ancient Egyptian, or Greek, or Roman, or Pompeian, or Byzantine, or Celtic, or Italian, or German, Gothic or Renaissance, whichever we please, Louis Quatorze or Louis Seize—worse luck,—but none of them seems to please for long, perhaps because their designers and producers are only "pleasing to live," as is the proverbial fate of those who "live to please." Ours is the age for masquerading, because we have no particular *reality* of our own—no style, in short. But we cannot be always masquerading, however amusing it may be once in a while, and whatever superior advantages we possess for getting at the best authorities. The motley and fantastic crowd palls at last, and we are glad to get back to everyday, if plain, habiliments, wherein we can at least feel at home.

It is this feeling "at home," too—which is so important in design—which marks the difference between artist and archæologist. Ease and mastery of expression in any material is the aim of the designer, while keeping strictly within the limitations of that material.

In making a working drawing the designer should be mentally, if not actually, the craftsman also: the conditions and necessities of the material ever present to his mind; its very limitations suggesting new motives, and stimulating invention, as it never fails to do when the designer and the craftsman are one.

So, too, where there has been no conscious aim at decorative beauty, we find beauty of result, at least as regards the all-important quality of line, which goes to prove that organic lines, or lines of construction, at least where the construction is simple

and evident to the eye, are usually beautiful lines, as in the sickle, the scythe, plough, ship, bridge, and wagon, for instance, and that this relation to material and use is a fundamental and necessary quality of all design.

Mistakes are usually made in the attempts to beautify by superadded ornament, unrelated to the object, use, and material, instead of treating it as a natural outgrowth, so that the absence of ornament is preferable to ornament not beautiful, or to ornament, however beautiful in itself, which does not decorate. And indeed, unless ornament is organic in this sense, we had much better be without it, and trust to the simple beauty of constructional lines alone.

Now this decline of organic design, it can hardly be doubted, is traceable in a great measure to the economic conditions and the development of machine industry in the interests of a commercial system of centralisation and a world-market which have characterised our century, and which have succeeded the system of division of labour developed in the last, as that succeeded, as Mr. Morris has often pointed out, the older system of local production for use ; and this *because* its effect has been to *separate the designer and the craftsman*, and to turn both more or less into machines. The effect of this is to throw the designer out of sympathy with the use and material of his design, to cut him off from the suggestive and inventive stimulus of the material, while, under the pressure of competition, forcing him to the constant production of so-called novelties, while it turns the craftsman or mechanic into an indifferent tool. The results are precisely what might have been expected, and what we have seen. In fact, the only wonder

is they are not worse ; but humanity has always been better than its systems.

As to the craftsman, the workman, he, perhaps, relegated to the performance of one monotonous function—a unit in a long sum of industrial production,—becomes but a part of a machine, his personality merged in the general description of "hands" (a designation, by the way, which does not encourage the development of brains), and, in short, all personal interest and identity with his work as a whole taken away, and leaving him with no prospect of winning public and personal appreciation—even if a "forty-thousandth part," as Carlyle would have said, of a product could reasonably hope to win such things—since all credit for the finished result is practically claimed by the employer.

These things being so, I say it is not wonderful our "industrial art," as we call it, *is* what it is.

What then should we aim at? If this is the *real* condition of affairs, what is the *ideal*? For unless we consider we are living under the best possible arrangements—social, political, and industrial—we must entertain an ideal of some sort, even if it be a stranger, like an angel unawares.

Well, then, if so far you are disposed to agree with me (firstly) as to the necessary conditions and considerations for the production of well-designed decorations and accessories of daily life, from the roof which shelters us to the cup we drink out of ; (secondly) as to the relation of the designer and producer of these necessities—for I claim that beautiful things are a necessity of any reasonable and refined human life ; and (thirdly) as to the condition of the producer of such things himself,—then we shall have

reached the conclusion that for the production of beautiful and thoughtful work you must have conditions of life wherein beauty and thought have opportunity to germinate and grow naturally, and as a matter of course, out of the conditions of daily life and work, as naturally as the apple-tree blooms in the spring. But this means no less than that the conditions of health and refinement, of a vigorous and full if simple life, be open to *all*, both men and women, without distinction ; and before such conditions can be realised it evidently implies that something like fundamental changes must take place in the constitution of society.

Then it comes to this, that all we have to make up our minds about are two things :—(1) Whether we consider art as an utterly unrelated, individual, and accidental matter ; or (2) whether we consider it and its beautiful results as the highest outcome of life, and as necessarily dependent upon the character, ideals, and conditions of that life. If the latter, then it may be worth while to take such steps as may be within our power and mental vision to co-operate towards the realisation of such a life and such an ideal, which, strange and roundabout a method as it appears, will yet prove the shortest way to our goal, namely, a true revival of design in its relation to material and use.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE APPLIED ARTS, AND THEIR RELATION TO COMMON LIFE

MAN in a natural and primitive condition does not begin to think of art until his physical wants are satisfied, since art is, in its true sense, after all only a spontaneous manifestation of mental life in form, colour, or line,—the outcome of surplus human energy. It is only under what is called modern civilisation that this natural order is artificially reversed, and men are forced, to attempt at least, to produce forms of art in order to satisfy their physical wants. Our troubles and failures in art may mostly be traced, directly or indirectly, to this condition of things—all the horrors and abominations perpetrated in the name of art, from the productions of the poor man whom necessity compels to chalk on the pavement, through the countless vanities and inanities of the fashionable store, to the refined cruelty of what is known as the "pot-boiler" in the "fine art" exhibition.

The primitive hunter in his cave, when his earliest efforts in applied art, in the form of flint weapons, had secured to him a

sufficiency of fish and game and furred overcoats, began to record his impressions of the chase, and to scratch the forms of his favourite animals on their bones. If these representations of reindeer, mammoth, and bison be indeed the earliest examples of art, it would seem that the first impulse in art is imitative rather than what I should term expressive or decorative—the spirit of the picturesque sketcher recording his impressions of natural forms rather than the ordered, systematic, applied art of the inventive designer, who uses natural forms or colours much as a musician his notes to produce a rhythmical arrangement—a tune, a pattern. If this inference is correct, we may perhaps take comfort in the thought that out of our present pictorial zeal and cultivation of the picturesque sketcher we may be led to the study of the more ideal and intellectual side of art.

However the conscious invention of line, and its variation in pattern came about, whether by the burnt stick of the idler (according to Mr. Whistler), or on the soft clay of the primitive potter, it is tolerably obvious that certain primitive patterns are derived from certain necessities of construction, such as the chequer from the square plait of a rush matting, where not taken straight from Nature's pattern book as in fish or serpent scale, and fan from leaf and shell. One of the most natural impulses in man is to make a mark or a cut upon something directly he has time on his hands. We can watch the development of this impulse in children. One line or mark suggests another, and strokes following one another in a certain order are found to have a pleasant and interesting effect. Strings of them round clay vessels were found to make them more exciting to the eye than the plain

surface. The handles of dishes and hunting knives and horns, bows, hatchets, nay, even man's own skin, all offered opportunities for the early ornamental impulse in carving and painting patterns. The implements in constant use, on which, indeed, rude as they were, life itself depended ; the things most familiar, most valuable, constantly before the eyes or in the hands,—these were the first things to receive the touch of art, which was then "applied," indeed, and applied only.

If we follow the manifestations of the artistic sense through the great historic periods we shall always find life and art, beauty and use, hand in hand,—the utmost artistic skill of invention and craftsmanship lavished upon cups and bowls, upon lamps and pitchers, upon dress and jewellery, upon arms and armour. We shall find the highest imagination, the most graceful fancy, and even wit, humour, and satire in the service of architecture, recording and reflecting the sentiment of the people : built into cathedral aisles and vaults, or glowing from the windows, frescoed upon the walls, or gleaming in the splendour of mosaic, or carved in endless fertility of resource on the stalls and misereres.

Under economic conditions of the production of all things for the service or delight of man for *use* instead of, as now, for *profit*, the craftsman was an artist, and all objects under his hand naturally developed a characteristic beauty. Ornament was organic, completely adapted to its material, and expressive of its object ; but with all our industrial organisation, subdivision of labour, and machine production, we have destroyed the art of the people, the art of common things and common life, and are even now awakening to the fact.

Under a commercial system of production and exchange all art has been rigidly divided into classes, like the society it reflects. Since we have to sell it across the counter, as it were, we must take the weights and scales to it—we must apply to an article of commerce the tests and standards of commerce. Thus we have divided beauty and use, and made them up in separate parcels; or, perhaps, having reduced both to powder, we try a conscious blend of the two to suit average tastes. We have the arts all ticketed and pigeon-holed on the shelves behind us. We have "industrial," "decorative," or "applied" art, as we now call it, and "fine" art—fine art and "the arts not fine," as my friend Mr. Lewis Day has it. Thus by degrees the vast general public, who must get their ideas of art, like other things, ready-made, have been taught to understand by the word "art" chiefly that form of portable and often speculative property—cabinet pictures in oil. Nor is this altogether wonderful, considering how, under our system of wholesale machine production, the appliances of common life have lost their individuality, interest, and meaning, together with their beauty. We are not sensible of any particular individual effort of thought or invention in an object which is only one of thousands turned out exactly like it. Plates, cups and bowls, chairs and tables; the moulding and panelling of our wood-work, and the metal-work of our sacred hearth itself, are taken as matters of course, like other productions of commerce. They were not specially made for you and me; they must be made to suit Smith and Jones equally well, or equally ill; and we shall probably be charmed to see them in each other's houses. We know that furniture and fittings are only made to

sell at a profit while the fashion lasts. Trade demands its "novelties" every season, and it would never pay to let a man sit contentedly in the chair that was solidly built for his grandfather. Much better let him fall between two stools (as it were), in his uncertainty of choice in regard to which of the confidently named upholsterers' styles he will seat himself in.

Then as to the application of art to the walls of his dwelling itself is the average man in a much better case? You cannot expect him to put up costly and permanent decorations for the benefit of his landlord, either outside or inside. He is a wandering hermit-crab, only too glad to find an empty shell that will reasonably fit him, at a not too exorbitant rent; and as for decoration—well, at least there are paint and paperhangings.

Of course they that are rich can hire a great architect and dwell in a perfect grammar of ornament. They can import the linings of Italian temples and tombs, and the spoils of Eastern mosques, to breakfast, dine, or play billiards in. The only fear is that Tottenham Court Road will soon bethink itself of cheap imitations of such antique wreckage; that Westbourne Park and Camden Town may be even with Mayfair and South Kensington! Cannot the moderate citizen already command his household gods in any style at the shortest notice? Great is commercial enterprise! Nothing is too high or too low for it. Where your fancy is, there will the man of profits be also.

The distinct awakening of interest and practice in the applied arts, which is a mark of our time, I should be the last to belittle or attempt to ignore; but at the same time, with all it has done and is doing for our education, with all the remarkable skill and

reproductive antiquarian energy it has called forth, I feel that we are landed in a strange predicament. For while on the one hand new sensibility to beauty in common things, and new desire for them, are awakened, on the other they are in danger of being choked by that very facility of industrial production which floods the market with counterfeit, set in motion by all the machinery of that commercial enterprise which is the boast of the age, but which all the time, by the very necessity of its progress, is fast obliterating the remains of ancient art and beauty from the face of the earth. So that it will be written of us that we were a people who gathered with one hand while we scattered with the other.

Economic conditions prevent our artisans from being artists. They have become practically, and speaking generally, slaves of machines. The designer is another being from the craftsman. It is only by a study of the conditions of the material in which a design is to be carried out that we can get even workable designs; and even at the best the designer who has no practical acquaintance with any of the handicrafts necessarily loses that stimulus to invention—that suggestive adaptability which the actual manipulation of the material and first-hand acquaintance with its own peculiar limitations and advantages always give.

One who develops a faculty for design has rarely a chance of being other than a designer. He has no time to make experiments, to strike out new paths. He must stick to the line by which he has become known in order to get a living. Nothing narrows a man so much as working continually in the same groove. The utmost that can be said for specialising a single capacity is that you get an extraordinary mechanical or technical

facility at the cost of all other qualities. It may not be possible to be supreme in more than one art, but the arts illustrate each other, and a knowledge of other arts and their capacities and limitations is sure to react upon an artist's practice in the one which most absorbs him.

It is true we hear of artists here and there who, though in the eye of the world inseparably associated with some particular form of, say, pictorial ability, nevertheless cultivate some secret amour in the form of a handicraft.

Professor Herkomer invited us the other day to see his wonderful application of the arts — his demonstration of their practical unity on his own premises at Bushey; and a most striking, interesting, and instructive exhibition it was. Perhaps few who know him only by his pictures would suspect him of being an accomplished artist and craftsman in many other arts, notably in wrought iron. From the personal point of view he offers a solution of the problem of how to associate art with everyday life. He is devoting his energy and artistic skill and invention to making domestic art, including architecture, monumental. The works at Bushey, if Professor Herkomer will allow me to say so, exemplify not only the power of individual direction and organisation, but also the power of co-operation and unity of aim in the arts founded upon, solidified, and supported by family traditions of skill, invention, and workmanship in the crafts, and how effectively all may be united in a common purpose. Another noteworthy fact was the remarkable way in which scientific and mechanical invention can be made to serve artistic purposes, as in Professor Herkomer's application of the dental point to the

carving and chasing of metal; and in the drilling machines we saw preparing work for the wood-carver. In so far as such a use of machinery does not necessarily condemn any man to be the slave of it, to be a machine-minder all his life, it would seem to be the natural and reasonable use of machinery in the preparation of work—to save the drudgery and waste of energy in its preparatory stages, and so reserve the delicate hand-work until the stage at which it becomes really effective.

There was another thing that struck me about Professor Herkomer's work, and that was the feeling and poetic sentiment he had enshrined in some of his beautiful carved cabinets. We all know the sentiment and charm of association which naturally gather in time about some piece of domestic furniture. Now art applied to furniture has the same, or rather a higher, power than time, for it can, by beauty of design and workmanship, invest a seat or a cabinet or a fireplace with a poetry of its own, far more subtle, penetrating, and suggestive than perhaps any form of art, because indissolubly associated with daily life and its drama. But when we hand over the production of these things to the trader, how can we expect anything of the sort? How can any sentiment or poetic thought collect about an arm-chair, for instance, that will not bear the weight of time, and has never received the touch of art?

I daresay furniture may be found to serve our turn, good enough for our shifting life of hurry, and strong enough to last out its own fashion. I only say that if we care for genuine art in these things, we cannot get them under the ordinary conditions of trade.

Yet there is not a thing we use, not the commonest appliance in our houses, that does not show some effort at least to have been spent upon it to make itself presentable to humanity. Unfortunately, nowadays, when native instinct and individual feeling have been so much swamped by forced mechanical industrial production, and the search for mere mechanical smoothness and superficial polish, instead of the finish which only comes of thought and loving care; these efforts to be ornamental are too consciously afterthoughts, while the eye is on the market and its blind chances and uninspiring averages. The added ornament to a thing of utility, instead of being a manifestation of the craftsman's feeling who made it, and his sense of pleasure in his work, is too often some miserable shred torn from the reminiscences of some dead language of decoration; all its grace and spirit gone, and even if moderately adapted in type and form to its purpose, is not calculated to bring a light to any eye, or joy to any heart, since it is but the product of joyless toil and competitive production—the mechanical smirk on the face of the thing of commerce that it is, intended to beguile the simple-minded and unwary into the momentary belief that it is a desirable and beautiful thing, when, in another sense than the poet's, it

> ——stands ready to smite once, and smites no more.

This unhappy cheapening and vulgarising of ornament, so far from fostering a taste for art, only degrades and distorts the natural feeling for beauty, which with reasonable scope and pleasant surroundings would develop itself as it has always done. Let not commerce pride itself in cant phrase on its claim that it places "art within the reach of all," for how could that have be-

come necessary until art had first been put out of reach? What could compensate for whole tracts of country desolated, and for the crowding of the people in our cities under conditions which put ideas of human dignity and beauty practically out of the question for the million?

Among secondary reasons for the decay of inventive and spontaneous design in the applied arts, I believe the hard-and-fast line which has been drawn between the artist and the craftsman is answerable, and the separation of the designer and the workman.

The designer is perhaps kept chained to some enterprising firm. Novelties are demanded of him—something "entirely new and original" every season, but not too much so. It is not surprising that the best talents should get jaded under such influences; that fancy should become forced or fantastic, and motive weak and tame, or perhaps lost altogether in a search after superficial naturalism, in defiance of fitness to material or use. Such a nemesis is too apt to overtake the specialised designer, who designs on paper only, without the stimulus of close acquaintance with, and practice in, some handicraft. The mere change of occupation is refreshing and invigorating, and stimulates the invention.

In so far as I have been successful as a designer, it has been, I believe, largely owing to my making myself acquainted with the conditions of the material in which a design was to be carried out; by striving to realise in thought, at least, the particular limitations and conditions under which it was intended to be worked; and I have always found that those very limitations, those very conditions, are sources of strength and suggestion to the invention.

For I am old-fashioned enough to believe that every material has its own proper language—regarded as a medium for expression in design—and it is the business of the designer to find this out.

The naturalistic or imitative impulse in art which is characteristic of our time, with the enormous and surprising development of the photograph, has had very visible effects upon art of all kinds. It is quite distinct from the expressive or inventive impulse, and though they may be a ground of reconciliation, the former is of far less consequence to art in its applied or related form than the latter.

What may be called the dominant art always seems to impress its own peculiar characteristics upon every other. Whereas in former periods—ancient, classical, mediæval, Renaissance—architecture may be said to have ruled over, or to have embraced all the arts, which in their earlier history were really essential parts of it ; and even when, by degrees, the family parted company and went out individually to seek their fortunes, more or less independently of each other, evidences of their architectural descent still clung to them—as in the architectural construction and character of portable furniture and fittings, and of their ornamental details.

Sculpture and painting to this day are obliged to retain the rudiment which betrays their architectural parentage ; in the one case by the plinth which supports the bust or the statue, and in the other by the moulding of the frame, with which the least architectural or decorative picture cannot dispense.

But pictorial art has now usurped the first place in the popular mind. It has influenced architecture ; directly, in so far as it has

led to the erection of a new type of building—the picture gallery—a place built with the sole aim of displaying pictures not painted originally with any idea of concert, or to be seen side by side. Surely a remarkably inartistic way of regarding art! Indirectly, the effect of pictorial art and pictorial ways of looking at things is seen in what has been called "the architecture of the sketch-book"—the somewhat restless and fantastic designs in a mixed style, chiefly in domestic work, full of little bits, nooks, and corners, which are characteristic of the last decade. For all that, a pleasant change and relief from the dull monotony of the quasi-classic style which preceded it. Sculpture, too, has not escaped the pictorial influence, as is shown, for instance, in the naturalistic school of modern Italy, which closely imitates in marble textures, surfaces, and momentary grimaces as closely as possible, but with more skill than taste. Abundant examples of such misapplied imitative skill are to be found in other arts, such as wood-carving, pottery painting, metal work, and textiles; although it is only fair to say that, of late years, in these arts there has been a distinct return to truer principles of design, with the revival of a feeling for the capacity of the material which embodies it, and a recognition, over and above mere reproduction of old work, of the distinction between art and nature, which is so often lost sight of. We are, however, never sure amid the vagaries of fashion that we shall not suffer a relapse,—that we are not threatened with an irruption of tea-roses, in high relief, on our curtains and chintzes, and landscapes (not carboniferous) on our coal-boxes.

On the whole, however, the applied arts have shown a laudable independence and defiance of the pictorial mood. The dog

no longer appears (after Landseer) on the hearthrug, but is often, in metal, relegated to his proper place on the hearth itself. So far so good. Albeit the desire for some of the happy results in art which belong to ages of greater simplicity of life has produced in some cases strange results, and some combinations of ancient kitchen and modern drawing-room one has seen are not altogether happy. We get an impression of the affectation of primitive simplicity and homeliness with modern luxury and artificiality, from which, at any rate, we can draw a moral on the connection between art and life.

The movement, initiated by Mr. William Morris and the gifted artists associated with him, to which we owe so much, began in a genuine return to honesty of purpose, and to sincere design and sound workmanship, founded upon a study of good models in the past; but it was the outward and visible sign of an intellectual movement which has its eyes upon the future, and, like all revivifying and stimulating impulses in art, it is the offspring of hope and enthusiasm.

Let us look to it that this English Renaissance of ours is not extinguished,—that it does not fall utterly into the iron grasp of commercialism. We may figure art as the fair Andromeda chained to the rock of modern economic conditions, in danger from the all-devouring, desolating monster of gain, until the deliverer shall come.

This is in sober truth the situation. Under our system of centralised industrial production, local art and industry are everywhere being dispossessed, and local characteristics and varieties are being fast obliterated. The machinery of trade forces prevailing patterns everywhere, and the mass of the world cannot

pick and choose, or turn the stream of invention for their particular delight. It must accept the latest novelty of commerce, and content itself for all shortcomings with her assurance that it is "just out" and will certainly be "the fashion." Thus it comes about that our cups and bowls, our tables and carpets, rather speak of the enterprise of a firm than historic traditions of a people, or the skill of a race of artists and craftsmen. The zeal to make things "pay" hath eaten us up, in the artistic sense. It is all very well to talk of informing with art the common accessories of life, to cultivate the handicrafts with enthusiasm, to distinguish ourselves by beauty of design and technical excellence among the nations of the earth, and after all, for a man to find that in proportion to the extra care, delicacy, and invention—in proportion as the craftsman works in the spirit of the artist, and is true to himself, without regard to trouble or time—the more difficult will he find it to make his living.

While such enormous differences in reward and chance of appreciation exist, as they do at present, in art, it is not encouraging to the artist in wood, stone, or metal to find that, however sincerely he may work, he must work in comparative obscurity, and with a very modest scale of remuneration. As long as the chance of both individual distinction and substantial reward is so conspicuously in favour of the pictorial artist, in spite of the best schools of design, and all the machinery for diverting the stream of artistic feeling, skill, and invention into their proper channels, I am afraid the tendency will be for every student who fancies he develops artistic ability to press into the already overcrowded ranks of picture-painters.

When we hear, for instance, of five shillings being offered as a price for carved panels in a cabinet, it is not stimulating to those who look to winning a competency in the practice of so highly skilled and artistic a craft as wood-carving.

We may lay such facts at the door of competition or apathetic indifference to applied art, as it pleases us ; but I venture to think that if the crafts and arts were recognised in public exhibitions of art, which are now practically devoted to one form of painting, it would do something. It would at least offer a chance for individual distinction in some other form of art. The work of the designer and craftsman could be seen, and by degrees people would begin to realise that beauty of design and workmanship counted for something besides in painting, and that the main business of an artist was not to emulate the photograph, or to take the wind (or the effect) out of the canvas of his neighbour in the pictorial struggle for existence (through unnatural selection), known as a "Fine Art Exhibition."

The arts are really inseparably associated and interdependent. None is greater or less than another, and all are in some sense applied. We are all consciously or unconsciously affected by our surroundings. We may become sensitive to beautiful shapes and colours, or lines, and afflicted by those ugly and coarse, or grow callous and insensible to them, which is perhaps the commonest result. It is therefore hardly possible to attach too much importance to art in its applied forms, seeing its intimate association with and bearing on life itself through all sources of refined pleasure.

In those periods of the past which we regard as great epochs in art, the arts and crafts are in harmony and close relationship with

each other. The culminating glory and mastery of Renaissance painting could hardly have existed without being founded upon the firm basis of the handicrafts, set as it were like a gem in a not less beautiful framework of invention in all branches of design; and we know that more than one great Florentine painter came out of a goldsmith's workshop. Such pictures as that of "The Adoration of the Magi," by Mabuse (shown at Burlington House a winter or two ago), or Crivelli's "Annunciation" in our National Gallery, seem to sum up the contemporary beauty of the handicrafts, and give them back to us again. A beautiful book was lately brought out, of Italian ornament, taken from the patterns and on dresses and hangings in pictures in the National Gallery; and taking the fifteenth-century painters generally we might get a perfect cyclopædia of applied design from the beautiful details which enrich their pictures. It was not archæology then, but the love of beauty and richness, the delight in the splendour of life, which led them to paint such things, and also, probably, because they were craftsmen themselves as well as painters.

I believe we are making a mistake in training students in art, from first to last, solely with the pictorial view. The imitative powers are cultivated to the utmost, while the inventive are neglected. The superficial effects of nature are studied, while the expressiveness and value of pure line, and its bearing on applied art, are very much overlooked. Thus the designing, constructive power seems to be considered secondary to the depicting power, or rather one phase of it; the consequence is we get large numbers of clever painters and graphic sketchers, but very few designers. Everything is looked at from the pictorial point of view, and the

term artist has been narrowed to mean the pictorial or imitative painter.

I should like to see a reversal of the principle. I should like to see a course of training in the handicrafts come first, as the most important to the cultivation of a sense of beauty in common life, not to speak of its importance to an industrial country, in an industrial age.

ART AND COMMERCIALISM

WE have been lately told by a brilliant impressionist, no less in words than in paint, that there never have been such things as artistic periods; that art is solely individual, and lives and dies with the artist. And among other interesting facts we learned that, after all, one thing is as beautiful as another (to a painter) if you only get it in the right light; that, in short, those striking features of modern landscape—wharves and factory chimneys—look just as well as antique towers and palaces when merged in the twilight—that is, when you can no longer see what they really are, and the imagination is free to invest them with the romance of a past age.

Now, whatever germs of truth such statements contain, they only throw us back upon the question, "What is art?" If it is the art only of the impressionist, the record in paint of the children of the mist, of factory-smoke even, and London fog; if nature must only be seen with the eyes half shut, and in the abomination of desolation—the squalid outskirts and Stygian rivers of modern

cities—then, indeed, former ages were but poorly furnished in the matter of art. What availeth the clear-cut noble sculpture of ancient Greece, and the work of her vase painters? What availeth the endless decorative invention of the Asiatic peoples, and of mediæval and early Renaissance times, lavished upon all the accessories of life, not to speak of its culminating glories in painting and sculpture? Could all this beauty of design and workmanship, in its constant growth and development through the centuries, have hung upon a thread—upon the lives of one or two persons of genius, springing, like mushrooms, from universal indifference, ignorance, and decay?

Such an opinion is, however, only a sign of the times. When every man fights for his own hand, and every artist has to make his own public, such an individualistic conception of art is not altogether surprising; and, were it intended to apply to the art of the present day only, would be very near the truth. But a little inquiry and consideration would show that art has deeper roots. The delight in beauty, be it human or of wild nature, be it of light, colour, form, or sound, is a common possession and a necessity of life, as in the higher sense it must always be, so long as the human has any claim to be the higher animal. And it should be remembered that certain animals and birds have been proved to be sensitive to certain colours and decorative effects, which sensibility is indeed wrapped up with the very fact of the germination and continuity of life itself; and this only convinces us how far down and deeply rooted is this sense in nature which has been so highly developed and specialised in man. Differing, it may be, in degree, but not in kind; cultivated, or uncultivated;

modified by centuries of habit and association; influenced by modes of thought and conditions of life—wheresoever humanity dwells, in northern snow or southern sunshine, it flowers and seeds, and springs anew.

Art, in all its forms, is normally but the language of this universal feeling which, shared more or less by all, consciously or unconsciously, is fully comprehended, passionately expressed, and communicated in tangible and eloquent shape by comparatively few. But I should say that every one whose heart is stirred at the voice of music, at the music of poetry; every one who feels the magic of beauty and is touched by its pathos, who is moved by the strangeness of the shifting drama of life; every one who vibrates, as it were, to the harmonies of nature, is a potential or latent artist.

As far as we can judge from its history, it would seem that this power of artistic expression, controlled as it is by countless influences of soil, climate, and character; constantly intercrossing and blending; springing from simple beginnings, and passing through various stages of growth, development, and decline, with the life of nations—this power, I say, seems to have reached its noblest and most beautiful results under collective conditions—of the arts, at all events—when all art was decorative, and all were allied with architecture, depending technically upon a certain continuity of tradition, and intellectually on a certain consentaneousness or universality of sentiment, ere it reached a high perfection among a people, being always at its highest in public monuments. It is obvious, since these conditions depend upon a vast number of other conditions, since art is the flowering of the tree of life in

man's moral nature, the form in which it is cast must, finally, be the outcome of the social, political, and economic conditions of society.

We have only to remember the temples and palaces of antiquity, whether the colossal fragments of the crumbled civilisations of the East, the sculptured triumphs of Greece and Rome, or the cathedrals and public halls of the Middle Ages. Art in such buildings touches sublimity. The effect, for instance, of such a building as that of St. Mark's at Venice is like embodied music—rich, mysterious, splendid, harmonious; storied with the legends and emblems of a faith, and a conception of the universe then corresponding with the knowledge and aspirations of mankind, full of solemnity, pathos, and dignity. But one of our own English cathedrals, where the ruthless hand of the modern restorer is not too obvious—say our historic Abbey of Westminster—will impress us in the same kind; and this impressiveness is not due merely to the effect of antiquity, though it no doubt contributes. We feel it to be the collective work of artists and craftsmen, as well as of ages, and we feel it embodies the aspirations, the religious sentiment, even the humour and satire, of its time, and, speaking through the architect, the mason, the carver, the glass painter, is heard the voice of a whole people.

But if one should go into a modern church in search of the ideas of the time, I am afraid he would only find the ideas of the new curate.

The former dignity and impressiveness of art is usually accounted for by the fact that it was in the past chiefly devoted to

the service of religion; but that was only because religious ideas had the strongest hold upon the human mind—because with religion were wrapped up all other ideas, and the sources of knowledge were in the hands of the priesthood. Art is bound by its very nature to give expression to ascendant ideas. But both art and religion have since been broken to fragments, and these are often so small and so incongruously pieced together, that they refuse to reflect any ideas at all; or so feebly and falsely, that men, in distrust of both art and religion, have turned to nature and science, which in the strongest minds fill the place of both.

But this, after all, is only like saying that the loss of the eyesight is compensated for by the increased stimulation of the other senses. It is a serious loss all the same.

Let us try to find, however, what ideas, even in the fragmentary and artificial condition to which it is now reduced, art gives us in our day. The one great distinction and difference which marks it from the art of ancient times consists in the absence of what is called popular art—the art of the people, hand in hand with everyday handicraft, inseparable from life and use—that spontaneous native art of the potter, the weaver, the carver, the mason, which our economical, commercial, industrial, competitive, capitalistic system has crushed out of existence by division of labour, the factory system, and production for profit; yes, our three-headed Cerberus has devoured the art, together with the wellbeing and the independence of the people, and stands unappeased at the smoke-gloomed industrial gate, over which is written, "All hope abandon ye who enter here." But

this basis of popular art was the soil in which all art germinated, and from which the goodly tree grew and branched out, to blossom in the more delicate kinds of painting and sculpture which, since they have ministered to the caprices of wealth, fashion, and luxury alone, branded in a separate class as "fine arts," have turned their backs upon their humble relations, the handicrafts, with the result that their house is left unto them desolate. Cut off, as it were, like flowers from their natural stem, they presently languish and wither away, or linger on, fantastic ghosts, shadows, and travesties of their former beauty.

But we are calmly told that "we must recognise, however, that modern art has no tendency in this latter direction (that of beauty). Beauty no longer suffices for us."[1] This is clear and emphatic enough. It comes from the French, too, who have assumed the position of dictators of taste, at least in painting, to the world at large. It is from a book on æsthetics, by Eugene Véron; I quote from the English translation. The book is an attempt to find a scientific basis and reasonable position for art under the conditions of modern society, and while the author fails to recognise the causes of its deterioration in the quality of beauty, he boldly acknowledges the difference between past and present aims, and insists on freedom of development. Yet the writer is possessed by a distinction which he himself sets up between decorative, and what he calls expressive art, applying this latter

[1] The same author says in another place. "No! perfect art does not necessarily concern itself with beauty of form, unless the object has been specially designed for art use. We must expel the idea" (*Æsthetics*, p. 125).

title to the pictorial art of the present day. As if all good art was not expressive!

In my view, however, all forms of plastic or graphic art, properly so called, must be dominated by the sense of beauty, as the condition of their normal existence and the condition of their successful appeal to the eye. The expression of beauty naturally controls all other expressions. Otherwise, it seems to me, art is overstepping the border line which divides it from other operations of the mind; from scientific analysis, for instance, and from photography, where the object is totally different, and everything is sacrificed to the attainment of fact.

Yet this is just what is happening in modern painting—everything is being sacrificed to the attainment of fact in some form or other, and painting has almost ceased to be an art of design.

The modern French view is frankly expressed in a passage quoted by Véron from Fromentin, who says: "The time has come for less thought, and for less lofty aims. We must now look at things more closely, and observe better. We must paint as well, though in a different fashion. We must work for the general public, for the citizen, the man of business, and the *parvenu*—everything is now for them." And he goes on to point out in effect that the painter must do the best he can under these rather depressing circumstances, copy his model, and take comfort in the belief that henceforward the greatest genius will be the man of the least invention. Here, at all events, it is clearly recognised that painting now exists for a class, which, possessing the wealth, commands all things that may be com-

manded by wealth, and as these things are many, a money standard is set up, which is in danger of becoming the only standard and test, whether of virtue and character, or artistic ability.

The results of such a state of things are visible on every side. We have seen that in all ages it has been natural to art to express the ascendant characteristics and ideas of its time, as well as to reflect the material facts of life.

Art is the sensitive plate in the dark camera of history, which records both the mental and physical features of humanity without prejudice, when all other sources of light are shut out.

So in an age when commercialism is supreme, and bourgeois ideas are triumphant, it is only natural that they should make themselves felt in art.

Accordingly, we see the influence of profit-making principles in the way in which painters become specialised for certain sorts of work, and in the rise and progress of the middleman or picture-dealer. As illustrating this, it is said of Verboeckhoven, the cattle painter, that the dealers were in the habit of sending orders couched in terms like the following: "Wanted, by Monday, three pictures of the usual description—cow, with two sheep." There is a story told of him, too, which is very suggestive of the effect of commercial ideas on art. One day an American entered the studio; he saw a picture which pleased him, and bought it at the artist's price—1200 francs. He could not take it away with him immediately, and when he came for it some time after, the painter had another, just like it, nearly finished. He was putting in an extra lambkin, when the American returned. A happy

thought struck the latter ; he would take the second picture too ; it would form a pendant to the other. But Verboeckhoven wanted 1300 francs for it. His customer hesitated. "Well, well!" said he, "the same price, then ;" and dipping a rag in turpentine he wiped out the lamb.

That grand development of the shop, the modern picture exhibition, is, again, another triumph of commercialism in art, which, faithfully following the accepted theory of the trader that supply will produce demand, succeeds in something like real over-production. Consider the huge annual pictorial displays and their chief product—the child of competition in art—the "pot-boiler." Truly the temple of art is the market, and its high priest the picture-dealer! "Take your choice" (or, rather, the recommendation of the adroit salesman), "go to so-and-so for your fish and your salt-water pieces—fresh every year, but all alike. If your fancy is flesh or fowl, you must go farther. This other gentleman will give you game pieces—he has a special license. Then you can finish with flower and fruit," and so forth. Yes, division of labour has triumphed even in painting, and to excel a man must specialise his talents ; that is to say, adapt them to the continual production of the same sort of thing. Thus, and thus only, can he hope to make either reputation or a living.

Very good ; but what becomes of art, unless the whole of art is comprehended in portraiture? For, in spite of our classification, our labels for landscape, portrait, genre, historical ; under this specialising, ticketing, commercial system, the tendency is for painting to become really limited to forms of portraiture. I do not mean merely the production of portraits, though that

is a noticeable feature, but I apply the term to characterise a certain literal and prosaic habit of regarding all nature, and literal methods of representation, whether of persons, scenes, or animal life; while the conditions of the market, even apart from the tastes of the ascendant class we have been considering, cut against even honest and faithful portraiture, but encourage that conscious making-up, dressing, and forcing of effect to catch the public eye, amid the further falsification of pictorial values caused by the entire want of classification and harmonious arrangement in the picture exhibition. So that in the result, where every inducement is held out in this fierce pictorial competition to painters to consciously work for forced effect, and put out their possible neighbour, pretentiousness and meretriciousness too often win the day.

When the decline in modern art is mentioned, it is usual for the average man, imbued with the commercial ideas of the age, and with the all-sufficient standard of money-value in his mind, to point triumphantly to the enormous sums given for certain pictures in these days, and to the wealth of certain successful artists. But those enormous sums only show that pictures are a marketable commodity in which the chances of large profits are involved, and the fluctuating values in the market make them objects of speculative investments for capitalists. Reputations fall and rise, often according to what appears to be the mere caprice of fashion, though even fashion is controlled by commercialism. And as to the wealth of successful painters, is that always in proportion to the excellence of their work, or the labour bestowed upon it, and is it always the accompaniment of the

highest skill and the loftiest aims? Overwhelmed with commissions, the fashionable painter has the alternative before him of over-work or inevitable deterioration. In many cases he becomes the victim of both. Then, too, for one favourite of fame and fortune, how many unfortunate, struggling, obscure? Thus at both ends of the scale the influence of commercialism is only for evil.

Consider, too, the waste of energy and talent in this unequal struggle for artistic life and recognition—this pictorial lottery, where so many blanks are drawn. Think of the capacities now swallowed up in the tasteless contention of exhibitions, which, properly organised and directed, might co-operate to adorn our streets and public places, our lecture halls and railway stations, left desolate now to another and more hideous form of competition in the clamorous posters of commercialism, which cover our waste walls and hoardings, and crowd upon the weary eye in all their shameless self-assertion and sordid language of the market, shouldering one another in the unspeakable coarseness of colour-bedizenment and graceless superscription.

In spite of our refinement, our care for art, our æstheticism, forsooth! and the lavishly-decorated private interiors of wealth, to this complexion must we come out of doors!

And in the meantime we are so inured and hardened to such disfigurements that we cease to feel their enormity. Nay, we must grow to like them, for are not advertising and bill-sticking an inseparable part of our system? There is no escape. So it is, and so it will be, so long as we allow this selfish, demoralising, and unscrupulous demon of commercialism to tyrannise over and

exploit us, ever with its continual cry of "Profit, profit, profit!" Every aspiration will be shouted down as visionary and unpractical; every real attempt to better our disorganised condition will be opposed by the dead weight of vested interests.

It is on record that one of the few living artists, properly called ideal—George Frederick Watts—offered to decorate the hall of the Euston Station with frescoes without charge, if the Company would bear the cost of the materials; and the offer was refused. How can monumental art, which is but decorative art in its highest form, exist in such apathetic conditions? To grow the flower you must not only have the seed, but a favourable soil and climate. It will be written of our age that we squandered the talents of our more original writers and artists upon the newspaper and periodical press. We preferred to be amused with a constant succession of brilliant trivialities and passing sensations, to beholding our best thoughts embodied in enduring and noble forms of art; and it did not seem to signify how many lives might be frittered away—how much energy and talent ground to powder in the process.

But monumental art demands the sympathy of a people bound together by common feelings, interested in the drama of history, and proud of their own struggles and sacrifices for freedom; accustomed to dwell with ennobling thoughts and aspirations, and accustomed to give them free and forcible expression; sensible both of the joy and the tragedy of life, delighting in phantasy and invention, and, above all, in beauty of form and colour. Yet there is nothing in these things but what naturally belongs to humanity.

Can such art be found where the best energies are engrossed in the feverish and unequal race for a more or less precarious existence on the one hand, and on the other made artificial by excess of wealth?—where the aspect of life, whether public or private, is neither simple nor dignified, and where cities become unlovely and inorganic accumulations of bricks and mortar?—where, with an appearance of zeal for art, education, and refinement, and the elevation of the masses, we allow mile after mile of mean or pretentious dwellings to carry the desolation of our unwieldy human warrens farther and farther into the green country, as the capitalist and the jerry-builder join house to house and brickfield to brickfield?

So we are thrown back on economic conditions, which, it is impossible to doubt, are finally responsible for these things, as, indeed, they have always been responsible for the form in which the art of a period is cast. How hopeless it is, for instance, to expect varied and beautiful street architecture with the present system of house tenure and the contract system in building! Here and there a dwelling, with some claims to beauty and distinction—or, at least, individuality—perchance arises from the sordid crowd; but these are the homes of men of wealth and exceptional taste, who build for their own delight, and have secured their ground. Here and there a board-school building relieves the monotony, and seems to point to the possibilities of better things. But the mass of modern London consists of the erections of the speculative builder—miles of absolutely uninteresting house fronts, composed chiefly of the repetition of one pattern, and that of the meanest and most uninventive kind,

crowded together—the ready-made packing-cases for civilised humanity which enters in and dwells there. Could these things be were it not for the powers of commercialism, based upon the individual possession of land and capital, with the one object of money gain in their disposal?

But all things are in the grasp of commercialism. Let a band of artists and craftsmen associate together, and, working quietly, make to themselves and all whom it may concern things of beauty and utility for the use and adornment of simple homes. Straightway there is a growing desire for these things as a relief from the dreary monotony of ugliness, or the pretentious luxury of second empire taste. Thereupon commercialism, perceiving a demand, brings out what it calls art-furniture, art-colours, and so forth—the addition of the magic word being supposed to make all the difference—sucks the brains of designers, steals their designs, and devotes them to objects for which they were never intended; deluging the market with strange travesties and tortured misapplications of ill-digested ornament, which overruns everything like an irrepressible weed, until, coming down to its lower forms in the cheap furniture shop, one is tempted to think that, in the matter of taste, our last state is worse than the first.

Thus are all the channels of production fouled. Does not commercialism hold the keys of the kingdom of both art and industry? Everything has to pass through the sieve of profit before it reaches the public; and to keep the huge and wasteful machinery of competitive production and distribution going, even at an ordinary jog-trot, it appears to be necessary in every depart-

ment of trade to make a vain show of so-called "novelties" every season, whether they are really new and better than the old or not.

But the counts of the indictment against commercialism are not yet filled up. The subject is, indeed, too vast and far-reaching to be adequately treated in the limits of a single paper. Hitherto I have kept very near home, but if we look abroad over the world we shall see the same causes at work, the same deterioration going on. Look at the effects of our rule on the native arts of India. The same process of extinction of the art of the people, of the village crafts, is taking place there as has resulted from the action of commercialism at home. (On this point I cannot refer any one who is desirous to pursue the subject to a more competent authority than Sir George Birdwood.) But all over the East, wherever European influence is in the ascendant, the result is disastrous to the arts, and thus the very sources of ornamental design, beauty of colour, and invention are being sullied and despoiled by the sharp practices and villainous dyes of Western commerce. Even in Japan, where the artistic sense seems instinctive among the people, so that everything touched by them bears its impress, since the results of ages of art labour and exquisite craftsmanship have suddenly been placed within the insatiable grasp of commercialism, there are signs that these riches are becoming exhausted, and the rarer and finer kinds grow scarcer every day. We can no longer expect to be given of the best, and wares are being consciously prepared for the European market. This is but the "retort courteous" for the compliments of Manchester in china-clay

and size. We actually hear of proposals to establish schools of design on the British model, the more effectually, I suppose, to drive out those quick, spontaneous, characteristic native methods of art-expression, than which nothing, perhaps, has more refreshed and stimulated the jaded sensibilities of European design. Thus even by contact with a vicious civilisation the natural quickness and intelligence of a race may bring about its own destruction.

Thus, in the fierce and unscrupulous struggle for wealth, one after another, virgin markets are opened, and new peoples exploited by commercial enterprise, which, like a huge steam plane, is passing over the world striving to reduce all art, and with it humanity, to one dull level of commonplace mediocrity, leaving us but of vital and beautiful varieties the relics and shavings. Greedy eyes are now turning to Central Africa. The next act in the commercial drama will probably take place there. Already the rampant explorer, posing as the benefactor of humanity, has gone far and wide, and the representatives of the blessings of civilisation, with the Bible in one hand and the revolver in the other, call on the aborigines to stand and deliver. Wheresoever commercialism sets foot, the curse of gold seems to follow. As regards its effect upon art, it is like the old Greek story of Atalanta's Race, but with a sinister climax. Milanion, the hunter (representing commercialism), enters for the race, and, carrying the fatal apples of gold, casts them one by one in the path of the fair fleet-footed, whom no competitor could hitherto outstrip. She yields, alas! to the seductive spoils—to the greed of gold—and henceforward her fate is sealed.

But commercialism, which seems now so triumphant, carries the seeds of destruction in its own bosom. The penalty of fast living must sooner or later be paid, by nations and systems as by individuals. Dissolution must inevitably set in. Already there are signs of the beginning of the end. Already men's thoughts and hopes are turned to that which shall succeed. "The old order changeth, giving place to new." Meanwhile the only hope, alike for art as for humanity, lies in socialism.

ART AND SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

TO men engaged in strenuous political strife, amid the stress and strain of the fierce war of commercial competition; when the forces of labour are organising themselves and forming in battle array against the fenced strongholds of capitalism; when the air is full of strikes and rumours of strikes; and when in the vicissitudes of such war many of our fellow-citizens can scarcely keep body and soul together, it may seem to some a vain thing to speak of art.

But it all depends upon what we understand by art. Is it the senseless frippery and vulgar bedizenment of plethoric wealth and whirligig fashion, the paint and the patcher to make smooth and fair the outside of society, and to hide the wrinkles and hollows which would tell the truth too plainly? Is it the hireling of pride and ostentation living to please the passing whim or craze—a harlequin in the masquerade, ever ready with catch-penny tricks, driven to the necessity of pleasing, if but for the moment, in order to live? Is it the rarity of the market—the thing measured by

fabulous price and sold by its weight in gold, though perhaps its producer may have had a bitter struggle to sell it at any price? Are these what we mean by art? or is it that kind and sympathetic enchantment which takes us out of ourselves; the genius of beauty and harmony which makes fair everything it touches, which knows no class or caste, which speaks a universal language; the friend of freedom and brotherhood, bringing order out of confusion, sweetness out of strength; not a matter of private property, but a common possession; whose price and virtue is not to be counted in, or commanded by, dollars, but lies simply in human and hopeful conditions of the life of a people?—entering into everything we touch and use, in the spade and plough, with their carefully-adapted curves and constructive lines fitting them for their proper work, and through all the simple, homely, and necessary implements of daily life and useful work, as well as in the organic beauty of its more conscious and emphatic decorative adornment, as in the carving or moulding or pattern work of our living-rooms, from the plate or the glass on the table to the picture on the wall.

Such simple and primitive things, often unregarded, have their influence, conscious or unconscious, on the lives of us all, if we have been fortunate in our surroundings, and where hearth and home exist at all, with all those tender and human feelings which gather about them more or less: perhaps even in these days of huge caravansaries with their here-to-day and gone-to-morrow inhabitants, on one side; and on the other, a night's lodging under a cart or a railway arch, or on the golden pavement of the wealthiest city in the world, with a newspaper for a blanket.

A newspaper! It might be an illustrated one too. Cheap art! Cheap indeed—almost as cheap as life itself!

Why, any art which is the outcome in any way of the conditions of such a life as that of which these are some of the outward and visible signs, is surely dear enough! The advocates of cheap art, of art for the homes of the people, are apt to forget that the price of cheap art, like the price of all cheap labour, means the cheapening of human lives. When we talk of bringing art to the homes of the people, it would be well first to see that they had got homes, or homes that they could call their own with any less doubtful security than a week's rent, or with any time to live in them after ten, twelve, or sixteen or eighteen hours of toil.

I agree with a friend, who, at a congress for the furtherance of art, expressed the opinion that the best decoration he knew of for a hungry home was a flitch of bacon. If the cupboard, like Mother Hubbard's, is bare, you cannot expect its owners will take much interest in the decoration of its panels.

There is a gaunt and hungry Cerberus which must be satisfied, and before Psyche, the soul of art, can enter, the body must be fed.

The fundamental necessities come first. Feed the body and you nourish the brain also. This seems a simple and obvious physical truth—a truism, in fact; yet it has required a great deal of socialist agitation to bring it home even to the limited degree in which it is beginning to be recognised, as in the case of school children.

The best artists' materials—the raw materials of art—will be found in simple, natural, and healthy conditions of life; not brutalised by excessive toil or degraded by the scramble for gain,

but where honest work is security for such a life, with leisure and freedom, and accessibility to beauty of art and nature for all. So that the claims of art are the claims of human life also, of which, indeed, it is but the ultimate expression.

The splendours of ancient art (even of the Asiatic despotisms of Greece and Rome) were lavished upon public buildings and public monuments, so that it could be seen and enjoyed by all the citizens in common, even the slaves. In the Middle Ages the churches, the great depositories of art in all its forms, were always open for the use and enjoyment of the people. The streets in those days were full of variety and colour, so that at any rate life was full of incident and romance, in spite of tyrannous lords and kings, and though innocent of exhibitions, and penny dreadfuls, and shilling shockers, with which we are fain to fill the void amid the dull husks of commonplace.

Coming to modern times, we see that art, like all other human products, has been affected by the great changes in the economic system—changes in the conditions of production and distribution, and of ownership of land, centralisation and the world-market. It has become more and more a matter of private property and absolute ownership, and we have so dropped out of the habit of putting it to any great extent into our public buildings and monuments that we have very few artists who know how to do it, or who think it worth while to give any time or thought to the subject.

Instead of sublime and noble public buildings, churches, and halls, which all the arts unite to make splendid, we have as a rule very dull or pretentious public offices, dull and respectable

churches—essays in architecture masquerading in various styles not native to us—and melancholy images of military, naval, or political idols in smoked bronze, like petrified orators for ever addressing an indifferent public, holding, as if in mockery, the dumb show of a perpetual open-air meeting under the presidency of Nelson in police-prohibited Trafalgar Square!

Under the sway of commercial ideas, instead of taking pride in and enjoying in common what belongs to everybody, the object seems to be to get hold of something that no one else has—some rarity, curiosity, at a fabulous price, or a next-to-nothing bargain, and to make art a thing purely of money or exchangeable value —considering it in the light of a good investment, in fact.

It may be said we have our national museums—storehouses stuffed full of the precious relics and fragments of the times when art was a living and growing thing. Valleys now of dry bones, except to a few students. National, certainly, but the nation as a rule has no time to go and see them in this industrial age, since they are not open on the one day—Sunday—on which the people could go. There are the churches, it is true, but the nation does not go to church—not, at least, to the same one, and the churches are no longer as a rule the depositories of the best art the age can produce. Some, indeed, will have none of it, and as to the old ones, we seem to be doing our best to improve them off the face of the earth altogether.

Again, under the mechanical and wholesale system of production for profit, a specialising of labour and art has taken place, and this has led to the practical extinction of the handicraftsman, and his severance from the artist.

Art may be produced *for* the people (or to sell to them), but it is no longer produced *by* the people. Every one has a mill of his own to grind at—working against time at a mostly monotonous occupation to meet an artificial demand, or engaged in stimulating that demand, or compulsorily idle in its absence, under a commercial industrial organisation so sensitive as to be affected by every fluctuation of the market, and wherein every body of workers depends upon every other, yet wherein each commercial unit works in competition with its hand against the hand of every other. So that the natural social bond is ever at war with the artificial and unsocial system—pending that true organisation of labour in which lies the only solution of collective human life.

Since then life for the mass of mankind, by the working of various causes—I will not say by consent—has become for the most part a dull mechanical round of toil, alternating with enforced idleness,—a kind of methodical and orderly lunacy with a few lucid intervals which we call holidays or enjoyment, amusement, diversion, art, and poetry—since humanity must have some kind of diversion, we have created a special class to divert us. As the mediæval lord kept his professional jester to ensure a supply of sparkling and ingenious conversation, so we keep, or allow to starve, our artists, poets, musicians, and actors. Very few of them can afford to do exactly as they like—to be free to give us their very best. That would be too expensive as things go; besides there are the laws of supply and demand (as Lord Salisbury has reminded us). So that we have no higher ideal even for an artist or a poet than that of a shopman behind the counter, supplying wares of various or particular kinds to

please his customers; who again perhaps are not demanding what they individually prefer, but what they think they ought to prefer, or what they believe other people—supposed to be authorities—would tell them they ought to prefer. It can hardly be wondered at then that our art should be so often artificial.

But should we be justified in assuming that these influences on art are the result of democracy?

It all depends upon what we understand by democracy, and what sort of a democracy. Our present habits and characteristics are derived from all sorts of sources and influences. Our present society is a huge conglomerate formation with fossils scattered in it,—the relics of living forms of past ages.

We chiefly differ from former societies by having a different class in the ascendant with lower ideals, or rather no particular ideal at all, unless 50 per cent or the subordination of most considerations to cash and comfort can be counted as such.

Commercialism, in short, rules us with a rod of—brass. While nominally and politically *free*, men were really never more dependent; and how can men be free so long as their bread depends on the will or the whim of another, and when they have no claim to a foot of land or a roof over their heads, except on condition of a heavy tax upon their own labour? And even in regard to the security of the continuance of labour itself, and therefore of life, they are no more secure.

And yet we are told this is democracy, and that one man is as good as another—yes, we might add, and a great deal better *off*, too.

What! is our social ladder planted then with its feet in the

hell of misery and poverty, its top rising to the false heaven of inane luxury and hypocrisy, and the type of man held up to admiration and imitation who works his way up, over others' shoulders, from Lazarus to become Dives?

Is this democracy? Is it not rather the old enemy, unscrupulous ambition, without its old excuse, under a new mask of thrift, business habits, respectability—secure in the automatic working of the great rent-collecting and interest-yielding machine, faring sumptuously every day on the labour of others?

And if it is proposed to do something to keep up our democratic character, and to endeavour to shorten the hours of labour of our wage-slaves, to throw them a very trifling crust from the table of life, even advanced Liberal politicians seem to think the world is coming to an end. What! the political clock stopping at eight hours a day! Well, I know that after about only six or seven hours of even interesting and varied work at the easel or the desk one feels rather tired; but fancy eight hours in a coal seam! or at a grinder's wheel!—eight hours of mechanically repeated momentary actions at the will of a steam engine! The only objections to an eight hours bill appear to me to be that it is not *six* hours, and that there should be any doubt as to whether, under the present system with "the iron law of wages," its benefits even then might not be illusory, *taken by themselves*. But no one proposes to do that, I presume?

But if the lot of the wage-labourer be not an enviable one, is the lot of his masters more enviable? We might well envy the physical endurance, patience, and pluck of a miner, or a docker, or a gas stoker, but can any man envy such qualities as have

been exhibited on the part of some locking-out masters and profit-grinding companies? Not even willing to fight on fair terms—men dismissed for sticking to their union, the workman's only weapon against capitalism! But even the life which is the result of the "cash and comfort" ideal is far from desirable, from the purely material point of view. *Cash* there may be, but the *comfort* is often illusory; stewed in hot-water-pipe atmosphere as if one was an orchid; stiff and uncomfortable dressing; and rooms in which the absence of taste is as conspicuous as the superfluity of furniture. All manner of formal customs and observances, hardly ever a chance to do something for yourself, and language often used to conceal if not thoughts at least feelings.

Is it in this direction we must look for our democratic ideal of life? Is there anything democratic about it, except that the butler is dressed like his master, a certainly unpicturesque result of democracy.

But it appears to me if democracy can show such social characteristics, it cannot be a democracy really. It must be a sham democracy—a commercial democracy, in fact. There evidently must be distinctions even in democracies, because we even hear of "Tory-democracy," quite the most peculiar notion. We are evidently dealing, as is usual in commercial matters, with questions of quality, 1st, 2d, 3d, and so on, like grocers' sugar, or like the classes on a railway—another democratic institution, I suppose.

Whatever our "class," however, we are all chained to the triumphal car of commercialism, which, in spite of the application

of brakes and occasional stoppages, rolls on its iron way round the world. Yet its speed and progress depend upon the constant watchfulness and careful labour of millions — upon stretched sinews and overstrained nerves; and who may count the sacrifices in the lives crushed beneath its remorseless wheels! For all that the progress of the car is absolutely dependent upon the continuance of that labour. What if the labourers were by common and universal consent to throw down their tools some day?

I have often wondered that some of our modern realistic painters do not give us pictures of the actualities of modern industry. Weird scenes from the "black country"—those desolate regions that bloom but in furnace flames; scenes in the mines; at iron works; nail and chain makers—tragic pictures many of them will be; truly historic; eloquent witnesses of the foundations of England's riches, and what they have cost.

It has always been the custom of a people to perpetuate in art their deeds of arms, to carve and paint their triumphs and victories, but we do not seem particularly proud of the real battles, commercial and industrial, upon which our modern importance has been built, and the toil and waste of human life by which it is sustained.

Yet the man who makes a fortune in business generally thinks it well to spend something in pictures. We do not, however, as a rule, see such subjects in his gallery. Our attention is called to the finished product of civilisation, and it is thought desirable to draw a veil over some of the intermediate processes. But few have the hardihood to invite the skeleton to the feast.

Among the curious developments of latter-day civilisation is

the rise of a school of painters who apparently spend their talents in discovering, if they can, the beauty of ugliness—the attraction of repulsion! For instance, I noticed at Paris this summer that there was quite a run on pictures of operations in hospitals. Even over here we have men who quite revel in London smoke and fog, and in the charm of the most ill-favoured spots.

This is no doubt more attributable to competition and picture shows than to democracy, but it is hugging your chains with a vengeance. If our artists are so affected by the ugliness of modern life that they—the supposed apostles of beauty—deliberately prefer an ugly subject to show their skill in treating it, we may perhaps lose our sense of beauty altogether in time. While we can, however, let us insist on the difference.

Art of course has many sides and capacities — as many, perhaps, as democracy. While from one point of view it may be regarded simply as the language of observation and record, and as such, I freely admit, it has an important sphere of usefulness; on the other, by means of figurative embodiment and poetic suggestion it is capable of appealing to and stimulating our highest faculties.

The figurative emblematic form of art has always had a strong hold upon the human mind. We see it under the influence of religious ritual and associated with civil life paramount in the art of past ages; and though under the modern search for naturalism symbolism has practically disappeared from the canvas of the painter, except in some few instances among the more thoughtful and poetic, it still maintains an active and popular life in political cartooning. Every week's public affairs and

public characters are treated in a series of pictorial parables, and appear in every variety of comparison, analogy, and disguise, pointing a satire or a political purpose according to the editorial or proprietorial views of the journal. It is noteworthy that it is always in the expression of the strongest feelings and convictions that the parable or symbolical form is used.

Politics and social questions in our time have largely taken the place which religious faith formerly occupied in the popular mind. They are the only questions in which you can interest the mass of mankind—the only questions, perhaps, on which people get really excited. Accordingly they delight to see the expression of their political or social faith in emphatic, familiar, and yet allegorical form, with a satiric sting in it if possible.

Nothing so forcibly expresses the common current of political opinion, or rather sentiment (or even prejudice), of the dominant sections of society as its political and satiric cartoons. They will be valuable material for the future historian. It is curious, too, how long a symbolic figure once accepted will last. Take the familiar one of John Bull himself. Is he really any longer typical of the comfortable, powerful classes—the financier, the banker—who really rule the roast-beef of old England? Instead of a mixture of semi-agricultural, sporting, and Quaker characteristics, a commercial and semi-oriental cast would now perhaps be nearer the truth. But even he must be prepared to give way to the rising power, the real John Bull—Labour. I think more advantage might be taken of this widespread love of parable, symbolic and emblematic art. Something, for instance, might be done in it as an effective means of conveying those funda-

mental economic truths which are so necessary to realise before we can hope to make real progress.

Illustrations might be given, for instance, of Mr. Ruskin's parallel—the *Crag* Baron and the *Bag* Baron.

The first is the baron of feudal times, with his castle on the crag behind him, and the lances of his armed retainers ready to swoop upon all coming through his territory and levy his blackmail.

The second is the baron of modern commercialism, with his own appropriate scenery behind him—his castles, gaunt factories, and instead of the forest of lances, a forest of chimneys. He rules by the power of the money-bag. His bag is beside him, duly labelled rent, profit, interest—the three great sources of his riches and power. He is only disturbed by reading of the progress of socialism.

Another effective design might be a symbolic representation of the present relations of capital and labour, suggested by the Hindu idea of the universe—namely, that the world is supported upon the back of an elephant, and the elephant stands upon a tortoise.

Even so the world of wealth and leisure rests upon capital (the elephant), which again is supported by labour (the tortoise), which indeed may not stand or go except by the will of the elephant and its rider.

The relation of capital to labour might be further symbolised by the *two* coins in the elephant's trunk to *one* in the mouth of the tortoise. The tortoise naturally looks discontented and resentful, and altogether the position of affairs is insecure—insecure because unnatural and unjust.

An emblem of evolution might be given by means of the

design of a plant growing from the root up, putting forth leaves, buds, and finally flowers, with the caterpillar, chrysalis, and final transformation into butterfly, typifying the progress of human society—a spiral progression, but culminating in higher organisation. And so from the course of growth and development in nature the socialist takes hope for the future of humanity, through changing conditions and transitions, and causes ever at work evolving a more humane and just order.

While on the subject of popular symbolism, I noticed a while ago a correspondence on the Lord Mayor's show. Though we may not approve of its present symbolism or its artistic taste always (and I have always wondered that a tableau representing Wat Tyler, who struck a blow for English freedom and the worker in the fourteenth century, prostrate at the feet of Lord Mayor Walworth was allowed to proceed through the streets of London), still the fact remains that it is the one free, popular, open-air spectacle for the people of London, and a historic relic of great interest; and since it brings people together in good-humoured crowds it cannot be an anti-social function. Much more might be made of it if its organisers were inspired by popular sympathies. It might be at once made more beautiful, more instructive, and more significant, and I should suggest that the money now spent on the banquet might be devoted to improving the show as a popular spectacle; spectacles and processions always will be popular. It is not as if the community—except perhaps the business part—would gain anything by the suppression of the show, whereas the poor would lose what is evidently an excitement and a pleasure.

Few sights are more impressive than the vast processions of workmen marching to the park with their bands and banners on one of those great occasions of demonstration or protest, which become so important and so necessary from time to time. Here, at least, is one of the artistic aspects of democracy which is likely to increase with the growth of true democratic institutions, and which affords in the design of banners and emblems the highest scope for emblematic and decorative art.

Processions as a means of propaganda, too, would be no bad thing. A series of groups illustrating the progress of political liberty and social progress from the earliest times to the present, for instance, or the relations of labour and capital (as in our elephant and tortoise), would afford splendid dramatic and picturesque material, and there are still a sufficiently large number of people who take in more ideas through their eyes than by any other door of the brain luckily.

This fact is at least taken advantage of by the advertising tradesman, not so much from a love of art, but with a view to gain his private ends; and so we allow a perfect epidemic of posters and puffery to pursue us everywhere with their vulgar effrontery and hideous forms and colours, from the streets to the stations, from the platform into the railway carriages, trams, buses, in wearisome iteration; or even to cram themselves impertinently between the leaves of the magazine or book we are reading. Well, we can but hope that posters are not the last word in mural decoration, and that perhaps another generation may think it worth while, instead of throwing away labour and skill in pasting every temporary boarding with flagrant announcements

and sensational eye-sores, which must come out of the cost price of the articles puffed, to endeavour to relieve the monotony of our house-fronts with some attempt at beauty of design or colour for its own sake.

I have been dwelling on some of the characteristics of our present transitional state of society. "Now is the winter of our discontent," but the spring will surely come. The new leaves are ever ready to spring from the shrivelled husk. New ideas, new forces, are at work which are destined to change the face of the earth. We may look either to the past or the future, but it is to the future we must look to realise the true ideal democracy—not a commercial, but a social democracy; the first business of which will be to take care of human life itself, and its conditions; to see that the tree is nourished at the roots before we ask for flower or fruit; to raise the standard of life all round; to make the present extremes of poverty on the one hand and luxury on the other impossible; to set up a new ideal of life—simple, but by no means ascetic, which will provide work, as well as full opportunity for leisure and cultivation of individual abilities; which will aim at the organisation of such a system of labour that the useful work of the community shall never press unduly upon one class; and which will not find it tolerable that the price of the comfort and enjoyment of one class should be the degradation of another. No, let our aim be *the abolition of class* and the establishment of a truly human society of equals; enough for us if a man is true to his manhood and a woman to her womanhood—and what prouder title or higher praise is possible if we consider this true meaning in all the relations of life?—with full scope for

those infinite varieties of talent and character which are sure to assert themselves. Faithful service to the community according to the capacity of each the only compulsion, in exchange for all the possibilities which a full and human life may afford, stimulated by friendly emulation in the true service of man.

Every one who contends for human freedom, for justice, and regulates his actions as far as he is able on the principles of equality and fraternity, which are practically the love of one's neighbour,—every one who does so, not in an ascetic spirit of sour self-denial, but because he takes his highest happiness in so doing, is helping to realise this ideal, is adding in his own way a stone to the great edifice of human effort and human progress, the spirit of which from remote ages, through persecutions, calumnies, oppressive laws, tyrannies, superstitions, ignorance, through good report and evil report, has led man out of the primal darkness, steadfastly bearing the torch of hope till hope becomes a faith—faith in socialised humanity.

If we are working in this spirit we need not trouble about the fate of art, for if we take care of life, art will take care of itself; it will become the natural and spontaneous expression of such a life, both as its familiar friend and helpmate, and its final crown and aspiration.

IMITATION AND EXPRESSION IN ART

TO any one who has put his head beneath the magic cloth of the photographer, and has seen, focussed on the glass screen, a beautiful pre-Raphaelite miniature of nature, the thought must have occurred—if the secret of retaining colours as well as forms in chiaroscuro by photography could be discovered, what would become of modern painting?

But, it may be said, photography is already one of the chief props and ministers of modern painting. As it is, the camera and the dry plate often supplement, if they do not supersede, the sketch-book and the laborious study, and the influence of photography and photographic effect is apparently the paramount influence in contemporary work. Would painting thus lean upon photography if she felt that she was but being led to her own destruction? Very likely not; yet, of necessity, the weaker leans upon the strong, and the object being the imitation of superficial fact, photography is strong where painting is weak.

For the last quarter-century and more, the stream of tendency

in art, reflecting that in life and thought, has been setting strongly towards naturalism; and this naturalism (or literalism, as I should prefer to call it) is both the cause of the effect and the effect of the cause. It both acts and re-acts, and certainly its action upon art is one of the most striking signs of the times.

Amid the confusion of critical tongues, the artificial conditions of the market, the absence of public taste, the false values of exhibitions, and the hopeless commercialism upon which they are based, what wonder is it that painters should eagerly seize upon such help as photography can give, to force still further already forced effects. But it is a fatal alliance, and photography must win in the long run in such an unequal race.

Art, like the aged and world-worn sage Faust, ardent for life and enjoyment, snatches eagerly at the promise of renewed youth —the vision of realised nature—held out by the demon, and ignores the consequences.

It is time to ask whether the game is worth the candle? The answer of course depends on our conception of the scope of art; what are its ends and aims? If it is indeed the exclusive pursuit of naturalism or literalism, there is nothing but the prospect of this unequal race with photography, which, in the attainment of fact or of phase, and even in beauty of tone and effect, puts any painting or drawing hopelessly at a distance.

On this course it is clear that art is destined to be finally beaten by science. It may be indeed that art is destined to be absorbed and comprehended in science, for even the hitherto uncontested field of ideal conception is threatened by the results of the composite photograph, and Mr. Galton's generic images.

Painting would certainly never have been brought to this pass if she had not been parted from the early companion of her way, but she has severed herself from craftsmanship, from ornamental design—nay, generally speaking, from design and invention, too—and given herself body and soul to literal imitation of nature dominated by commercial sentiment and sensation.

Again it may be objected, is not the business of painting then to imitate? I answer, only a part of the business, and only in so far as imitation contributes to expression, whether of beauty, or thought, or story, or phase of nature, in which it ceases to be merely imitation and becomes an art—that of representation. Where would be either use or enduring pleasure in art, if it did not express something besides the mere accidents of superficial fact? As well might the poet deal in nothing but description, or the musician limit himself to reproducing the noises of the farmyard, as the painter be content to ignore invention and design, story and poetic suggestion. In these things the human mind comes into play, and it is these qualities that give life and endurance to art. Nor is there any substitute for them. We cannot get our designing done by machinery, or our thinking by photography. The only known mechanism for these processes is that of the brain itself.

Mere cunning of hand invariably tires, and this is why superficial literal imitation by itself is always so dull. We are bored to death by what is called realism, and can only keep up our interest by a constant succession of novelties; like the audience in a theatre, who tire of a mere scene, an arrangement of properties however real, according to stage realism. On the stage, however,

strongly as it reflects the literal tendencies of the day, art may safely go much farther in that direction, as the meaning and expression (to which thought, scenery, and properties may contribute in a high degree) must finally depend upon the dramatic action of the living persons, and these, at least and from the pictorial point of view of the stage, from the very fact that they are alive, can never be overpowered by accessories.

Of course, I admit, as regards painting, apart from any poetic embodiment or abstract treatment, there is the expression of the facts of light and colour, texture and tones, and these—although, with the exception of colour, they can be rendered by photography with an accuracy and completeness quite unapproachable —really would appear to be at present the only qualities, the only facts, the expression of which is worth the attention of the painter. If that is really the case, painting—pending its final extinction by photography—must be content to take an inferior intellectual position among the arts. "Art is art, precisely because it is not nature," said Goethe, but the modern painter, so far as he is articulate, would render it, "Art is art, precisely because it mocks nature."

The career of an illustrious contemporary (as shown in a recent collection at the Grosvenor Gallery) illustrates in a remarkable way certain degrees of expressiveness and imitation in painting. It is remarkable, too, as showing that, even when the object in painting is to cast off all convention, and to represent nature without prejudice or prepossession, how, even then, unconsciously, under the influence of passionate feeling striving for expression, the painter develops, as it were, a new convention of

his own. The most striking quality about the earlier pictures of Millais is not what was commonly supposed to be the chief characteristic of the pre-Raphaelite school, namely, their unflinching truth to nature, but rather the intellectual force of their poetic and dramatic expression. Comparing the work of the earlier period—say from 1849 to 1856—with the work of the later—say of the last ten years—one may see as totally different aims as are perhaps possible in the work of one man. The close textures, beautiful detail, fine and finished execution, deep though not always harmonious colours, and romantic feeling of the earlier time have in the later work entirely disappeared, and nearly everything is sacrificed to the more superficial facts of full relief, and accidents of lighting, atmosphere, and surface. I do not lay so much stress on the fact that the recent pictures are chiefly portraits in the technical sense (although one certainly does rather resent that personages of mere wealth and fashion should have usurped so much of the painter's time, and filled so many of his canvases, to the extinction, in great part, of the romantic and dramatic element in his art), for Millais has always been a portrait painter whatever his subject. His one particular idiosyncrasy as an artist has, from the first, consisted in the force and directness of his realisation of nature, which is of the essence of portrayal, or portraiture. He never showed any tendency to idealism in any shape, so far as I am aware, but has always been content to take nature as he found her, without endeavouring, by careful and conscious selection and comparison, to build up types of form, or elaborate schemes of decorative composition and colour. He is not a seer of visions or a dreamer of dreams.

Life and circumstance are enough, without reading between the lines. In this directness lie both his strength and his weakness as an artist.

Again, to compare the last with the first, one is struck with a certain flatness of the general effect of the early work, as in the Ophelia, for instance. And to this, no doubt, the multiplicity of careful and beautiful detail contributes, as well as the deep and frank tones of colour afore-mentioned. The impressiveness of the results is dependent upon those qualities—upon this treatment—bound up with them as inseparably as the words of a poet are with his matter and style. When relief, and superficial and accidental facts of light are sought after, the whole feeling changes, and the method with the characteristics expressed. We stand in the common light of day, and talk with the members of Society. Gone is the glow of the romance—the passion and the earnestness of youth, with the beautiful detail, and the even and certain finish of the workmanship. We have to make the best of it, and extract what satisfaction we may from the contemplation of a coarser realism of more obvious facts, including a certain amount of British brutality, a vulgar ostentation of wealth, and the attraction or repulsion of matter-of-fact personalities—these things being expressed by an execution which shows more directness than care, and more force than finish or beauty.

We draw the lesson that with increased facility there is less care, and a coarser literalism takes the place of earnest realism, and while the attention is narrowed to individual and accidental characteristics, there is a notable decline of thought, dramatic

power, and decorative effect; depth of colouring has departed with beauty of execution, which are the natural vehicles of the expression of quite different aims.

We are led to the conclusion that the search after a more obvious, literal, and surface imitation of natural fact is followed at the sacrifice of the more refined and delightful qualities, and with the limitation of these comes the limitation of the range of expression. The more of nature,—at least of her more superficial facts,—the less, apparently, of art—the less of the expression of the individual thought of the artist.

If this be a true statement of the tendency of modern painting, let us be satisfied with photography. If we value literal representation solely, and the preservation of superficial facts and effects of surface lighting, photography can give them better and more certainly than any paint—can produce in a moment of time what years of labour could never accomplish. And then, too, the photograph gives us the facts, and, within their limited range, as much force of expression as belongs to facts, without any false sentiment, which is too often the case with the painter. If we can get our facts registered for us with absolute certainty and fidelity, and without individual bias, let us take them and be thankful: but let art give up the struggle for territory over which she can no longer claim exclusive or absolute jurisdiction. Let her rest in her own borders. There is a large and ample domain in which there is no fear of invasion; a fair and beautiful region, peopled with the

> Forms more real than living men,

flowered and fruited with the rejuvenescence of the thought of all

time ; where invention and expression are the familiar friends and councillors of art, and truth becomes identical with beauty in the large control of design.

But this is the possession of merely Decorative Art—despised and rejected of men ; fit only to be lounged upon or trodden under foot : a toy in the hand, not credited with brain or soul, or power of expression, speaking in strange tongues and parables, or at the best a harmless species of lunacy, fed but with the crumbs from the table of the pictorial Dives.

But the race is not always to the swift brush, or the battle to strong colours, and painting is not the only eloquent language of expression in art, although its effects are more obvious and palpable. We have but to think of the means of expression at the command of the architect (unrestricted, that is, by Boards of Works and Building Acts)—even without the aid of sculpture or painting—in the simple but sublime language of proportion, mass, space, and outline. It is true, imitation is not unknown even in architecture, and we live under the shadow of the great historic styles ; but in architecture anything like actual imitation of the materials and surfaces in other materials is now universally despised and condemned. It remains, so far as it is an art, a purely expressive one. How emphatically, and with what subtlety, architecture is capable of expressing ideas and principles of construction ! and in so doing expresses not only these but the laws of evolution, and the changed temper of peoples, and social conditions in the long result of time, gathering under the shelter of its wings the whole family of arts and crafts which are its offspring.

Sculpture, too, eloquent in its severe limitations, and by reason of them, speaks in the language of pure form. It is true, it has its own equivalents for colour in contrasts of surface and richness of detail, but the attempts to introduce pure imitation, as with the Milanese school of modern Italy, have certainly not elevated the art. Any imitative success has been gained at the price of higher beauty and meaning—of the higher qualities of form, and repose and dignity of expression. I have noticed, too, that in sculpture, where imitation has been the primary object, the effect is curiously false, as in the case of a portrait statue in marble in costume, where the lace and different dress materials are sometimes imitated with surprising dexterity, but only to give an impression not of life but rather of a whitewashed effigy. Clearly, a step farther is called for if imitation is the sole object. We must revise the art of effigy and paint up to the life. Nor, where faithful portraiture is demanded, can there be any reasonable objection.

Interesting as coloured monumental effigies may be, and however undoubted the fact that it was the practice of the ancients to tint their sculpture, it cannot blind us to the more delicate and elevated expression of pure form, which no sculptor, I suppose, would forego as the justest and most eloquent medium for the embodiment of a heroic or poetic theme—or even solely as a means for the expression of the carver's sense of the decorative effect of light and shadow in relief work.

There can be no doubt, too, that colour obscures and disguises form. I do not mean to say that it has not an emotional expressiveness all its own, but it is a different kind. We feel the

beauty and expressiveness of a drawing by Mantegna or Albert Dürer, and do not ask for colour, or for more heightened and graphic expression than their pen lines convey. This seems to show how little the highest artistic and intellectual expressiveness is dependent on close or literal imitation of nature. To mock nature is one thing, to read and to express her, quite another. I doubt if, even with the photograph and the modern literalist, we could get on without line to make clear the nature of many things disguised in the illusory actuality of light and shadow: facts of construction, for instance, facts of growth, facts of texture and character, can all be made more emphatic and expressed clearer in a line drawing; and, apart from individual skill in its use, this is, perhaps, largely owing to its capacity of abstraction—which sounds like a paradox! A drawing in line is the result of a convention—a treaty between the mind and nature, signed by the free hand of the designer, and sealed by the understanding and imagination. Nothing shows so completely the quality and resources of a master as his perception and treatment of the value of line: nothing more eloquently and distinctly speaks of the vigorous or enervated condition of art in any period than its line drawings. Line is the nerve-fibre of art, knitting and controlling the whole body, but flaccid and meaningless in its day of decline. Compare, for instance, the woodcuts of the early sixteenth century with those of the later or of the next century, and the difference corresponds with the vigour and decline of the Renaissance impulse in design.

The indifference to the value of line as a means of expression in our day is an ominous sign of the state of the arts—despite the

so-called revival of etching. Our students are taught to stipple and work up their drawings in chalk, and charcoal seems to be the favourite medium with the modern painter when he is *obliged* to draw : but both are far inferior in delicacy and precision, and therefore in real potentiality of expression, to the pen-point, or even the firm lead or hair pencil. Effect, however, is more readily produced in chalk or charcoal. If you are not forcible you can at least be black, and you can command an abundance of the convenient obscurity of shadow to hide the want of invention and the absence of purity and precision of line.

In the rush, too, for directness and the unbiassed imitation of nature, another expressive resource of line has been thrown overboard, and this is what is usually included in the term composition. No doubt this has destroyed the commonplace, second-hand stock-in-trade species of pictorial composition, but it has also discouraged higher aims. But few painters nowadays, I imagine, except those more or less interested in decorative design, trouble themselves about schemes of line and counterbalancing curves, or think much of their picture in the skeleton.

The concentration, too, of the attention of the modern painter —the narrowing of his interest to the imitation of facts—tends, as we have seen, to the limitation of his dramatic or poetic interest, or even to its entire extinction. Our painter's strength is spent upon the realisation of persons often uninteresting, and incidents and themes quite frivolous or even repulsive.

I am far from wishing back the old days of church influence and patronage, when most pictures were religious and the demand for Madonnas and saints almost unlimited ; but when congratula-

tions are offered on the changed conditions—that art has broken loose from old encumbering traditions and from sacerdotal fetters, it is too often forgotten that, in spite of her boasted freedom, it is but an exchange of bondage. When we see gifted artists chained down by their very success to the constant production of the same sort of thing—generally the presentment of some fact or phase of nature without ulterior significance or import to humanity—where is our boasted width of range and variety of interest?

Year after year our exhibition catalogues give us the same titles—the same quotations even—I will not speak of the works corresponding with those legends. I do not know that the money bag makes a better escutcheon than the cross keys. I prefer the Phrygian cap and the red flag to either, and truly our material gods, it would seem, give not so much freedom as the old spiritual ones; for even in the oft-repeated nativities and crucifixions of mediæval and early Renaissance painters, what a world of invention and expression was often put into them! Such subjects became, indeed, not only most fruitful themes for the display of all the resources of the painter in the delineation of the life and manners of his time, but their figurative significance gave them a solemnity and depth of meaning for which it would be hard to find an equivalent in modern art.

Storiation, which played so important a part in ancient art—what scope has it in the modern cabinet picture? Were it not for the decorative designers, the idea of story and series in pictorial design would become extinct. Even in their hands it is too often too much on the old lines, embodying the old ideas, and —from the necessities, perhaps, of much or most important

decorative work being for ecclesiastical purposes — the ancient creeds.

If, owing to the absence of simplicity and dignity of life, but few modern scenes lend themselves to decorative storiation—if the modern body be too cumbered and disguised, what of the mind? Surely there are thoughts and ideas distinctly modern, capable of figurative and poetic embodiment, and charged with concern to humanity, if only he who runs could be persuaded also to read.

If a painter here and there shows that he possesses any ideas a little beyond the range of the illustrated newspaper, he is sure to be laughed to scorn, and should he persist in his belief that painting is not merely to be regarded as a commodity of the market, or as a toy for grown-up and rather dull and *blasé* children, let him abandon the hope of making his bread by it.

A word as to the expression of action. A while ago Mr. Meybridge lectured artists, through the Royal Academy, on the right way to depict the action of a horse. He certainly succeeded in demonstrating, by a very ingenious method, whereabouts a horse's legs are found at certain given consecutive moments—arrested by the photograph—but no more striking proof could be given, especially when motion is concerned, of the meaninglessness of an isolated fact than one of these photographs. Taken singly, they express arrested action, which is exactly what they *represent* and nothing more. It is only when the series is placed in consecutive order, and turned on a wheel, so that they succeed each other on the retina, that the action is really represented, and it is then of course complete; but that is *illusion* rather than representation.

Mr. Meybridge would have persuaded us that artists have been fools since the world began in this matter. But in representing a galloping horse, or any figure in action, in design, the problem has always been to avoid the look of arrested action which the exact record of the moment gives. The artist has to express, not arrested, but continuous action. He must suggest, therefore, the moment before and the moment after, and that often in one figure. The result has been a certain convention, which conveys the idea of speed to the mind more completely and convincingly than the exact imitation of the action of any given moment could possibly do.

The truth is, that the external facts of motion are, like other facts, expressionless in design, by themselves, and unless associated with other facts and suggestions, and this has hitherto been frankly acknowledged in art. I do not say that a new convention —new and more perfect methods of expression of nature in art— may not be built on the aggregation of more accurately recorded and observed facts, and more profound knowledge. The plain inference is the other way. The degree in which exact knowledge controls and determines methods of representations in art is always a nice problem, and I do not pretend to settle it.

My conclusion is, that the modern mind, in its eagerness for literalism, has been led so far, after all, to but a superficial kind of realism, and that which passes for realism is indeed too often only a one-sided realism—reality only half realised. At the best it is but the realisation of the passing sensation—the passing moment —the least real thing in life and nature.

Nature, when we think we have seized her, verily turns and

mocks us in her turn. Alter the focus—go a little farther, or a little nearer, and all is changed and falsified : so the artistic chase, like the artistic problem, is endless. While idealist and realist are disputing, that Pluto of art, the photographer, instantaneously seizes the fair maiden, and carries her in a moment to his dark chamber, whence, though indeed she reappears ravished of colour, it is in such verisimilitude as might well be the despair of the painter, were not his vows addressed to a yet fairer than Persephone.

ART AND INDUSTRY

WE are here to further the advancement of art in its application to industry. Are we quite sure that we do not mean the advancement of industry by the application of art?

For the last two or three centuries we appear to have been applying all the power of organisation, the ingenuity, and the mechanical invention of man to the advancement of industry in the interests of competitive commerce; not with the advancement of art as the object, but rather that of profit-making, with the economic result that we cannot find work enough for our compulsorily idle hands to do; while in the din of the vast workshop of machine production, and the fierce battle of the world-market, art can hardly find a place for the sole of her foot.

Mechanical invention in the interests of trade has dominated us. Mechanical invention has outstripped the invention of the artist. Mechanical smoothness has taken the place of artistic thought and finish. And why? Because to our great deities of commercial enterprise and successful trade, the amount of the

output is more regarded than the artistic quality of the material and work.

The very spirit and meaning of the word "artistic" implies something harmonious; something in relation to its surroundings; something arising out of the joy of life, and expressing the delight of the artist in his work, however arduous; something personal, the expression of one mind, or of many—congruous—expressly and lovingly addressed to particular persons, and adapted to particular places and things. Not a mere system of guess-work, beginning with the designer who makes a guess at the sort of thing that may possibly "take," rather than what he personally likes and has a feeling for. The designer, again, being dependent on the manufacturer, guessing what the market or the trade will take; or he again depends on the conjectures of the trade as to what an unknown quantity in the public can be induced to take. The public, again, surrounded with every species of conundrum in the name of art, is driven to guess in *its* turn not as to what it really likes, or what is good and fitted to its purpose, but what is the correct thing to buy, or what other people buy, or are likely to buy. So the whole structure of applied art, under our present system, speaking generally, is built upon the shifting sands of insincerity and speculation.

Let us inquire what natural affinity there is between art and industry. Properly considered, obviously, they should be inseparable; but the spirit that rules industry now is wrapped up in the one object of the salesman—to sell.

The spirit of industry is merely to produce. The spirit of the artist is not merely to produce, but to express—to both

produce and to express something which is a joy to him in the making, and may be a joy to the user and beholder. In the search after perfection of method of expression, in the struggle to express his thought, to make his work, whatever it be—the lines of a design, a simple, repeating pattern, a moulding, a sculptured ornament, a figure, a group, a picture, a building—to make his work live, to answer to his thought, and so to touch the thoughts of others, the artist will frequently undo or destroy his own work —will cast aside the labour that has cost him perhaps hours of toil and thought, and try again, until his work answers more nearly to the ideal in his mind.

Considerations of the market are forced upon him, it is true, too often; but these have no necessary connection with art, and in so far as he ceases to be true to his ideal, and is seriously influenced, or driven, by circumstances to work consciously and exclusively for money, as an artist he must deteriorate.

Now, the man of commerce—the controller of industry—seeks only to make a *saleable* article. He is influenced in his industrial production simply by this object. He takes the opinions of salesmen, of the trade, not of artists, as a rule, and so far as any artistic standard or aim enters into the produce of his manufactory, it is strictly checked by the average of what his rivals are doing, and by the discovery of what the big public can be persuaded to buy.

Slowly, perhaps, some personal force or centre of artistic sincerity creates a new impulse and new desires in a jaded public, sated with every craze and whim under the name of art; slowly the wave of fashion rises, swiftly it rolls. It affects the salesman

first. His arts fail him. He cannot palm off these coarse and inharmonious colours, these hideous patterns, or this clumsy furniture, charm he ever so wisely. He sells at a "great sacrifice," and returns to the industrial king, the manufacturer, who either evolves something "new and original" out of his inner consciousness on the premises for next season, or he seeks out the artist. He makes a compact with him. The man of ideas meets the man of industry and profits. The result is of course a compromise. The artist must turn out taking novelties in design for the market. That is, the market of guess-work. The market must be the first consideration; it is imperative to sell one's season's goods.

Commerce, like the old woman in the nursery tale, stands at the stile (of an overstocked market) with her obdurate pig (overproduction) that refuses to move until the stick (of new demand) has been persuaded to bring its influence to bear, and one by one all the characters of the commercial drama act and re-act upon each other by the very necessities of their existence, middleman and public, capitalist and labourer. We shall find their prototypes in our nursery tale, up to the ox (personifying John Bull) driven to action from the fear of the butcher—the Nemesis of foreign competition.

The little allegory from the nursery fits the situation exactly. It has been revealed unto babes.

So the whole mill of industrial commercial production is fed and set in motion, and grinds on year after year. The wheels of its machinery, like those of fortune herself, lifting some into prosperity, upon the condition of the ruin of others, and the

working order of the whole depending on the existence of the vast majority of our brothers and sisters in the condition of not being more than one week's remove from destitution.

This is the social and industrial structure we have raised, in which we live and move and have our being. Art and industry, like figures carved in stone, may adorn its portal, and our hopes and fears, our regrets for the past, our thoughts for the future, play like cloud shadows upon its grim façade, which will yet master our efforts at humanising and beautifying, until its tenants some day insist on improvements, perhaps even involving a change of plan and structure.

Meanwhile our fluctuating harlequin of fashion and trade comes and goes. This year we are going to be "artistic"—everything is to be "artistic"—art colours, art furniture, art in the attic, art in the coalhole. Next year, away with your degraded colours! Let us be grandly barbaric in mauve and magenta! Is this the delightful spontaneous caprice of unstable humanity, seeking novelty in the simplicity of its heart? Or is it wholly unconnected with the inscrutable movements and exigencies of those commercial and industrial potentates whereof I have spoken?

Anyway, art and industry remain a somewhat ill-assorted couple, and furnish an additional modern instance to those who rudely ask, "Is marriage a failure?"

Of course, to the artist accustomed to believe in personal work—to value the individual touch and characteristic method—the whole idea of the application of steam-power, and the mechanical reproduction of any form of art wholesale, is an entire

mistake ; or, at least, it can only be countenanced under certain conditions and in certain well-defined directions under controlling taste, such, for instance, as the domain of the printer, whether of books, cottons, wall-papers, and the like, or in the work of the loom. I have constantly been struck, in passing through one of our industrial exhibitions—those huge trophies of the world's trade, that we have raised from time to time, and which are counted among the triumphs of the century—I have often been struck with the marvellous mechanical invention, and the extent and range of the application of steam machinery. One is impressed with a vivid idea of the lightning speed with which the competitive race is run, and the scale on which the world's market is stocked. But if one inquires how this mechanical march has affected the progress of art, the answer generally appears in some such shape as this. We may, perhaps, see some wonderful piece of ingenuity and mechanism—a carpet loom, for instance, such as I saw at the American Exhibition in London. The machine itself appeared to be a marvel of adaptation ; but it would seem as if all the invention had been exhausted upon the means of production, and when one came to the product itself—the carpet in the loom—the result as an artistic matter, a matter of design and colour, was simply deplorable. So that one generally turns from these triumphs of the century with a conviction that we have lost sight of the end in our search for mechanical perfection in the means.

The world, having increased so much under the sway of our industrial kings (we will grant them that), having congregated in vast centres for the convenience of commerce and industry,

necessarily has large and immediate wants. Millions of interdependent human beings demand to be fed and clothed, warmed and sheltered, with swift and efficient means of communication and carriage from place to place. Wholesale industrial production does it, with the aid of steam and electricity; and does it so thoroughly (as regards quantity and the purchasing power of the community) as to overshoot the mark and glut the market, which means that a number of citizens are obliged to go without the comforts and necessities they have assisted in producing, seeing that the system of production is not economically organised in the interest of the community, but rather for the profit of individuals.

The world does not stop in its demands at food and clothes and shelter, however. Man does not live by bread alone. He needs mental bread, spiritual exaltation, amusement, excitement, and would clothe his thoughts in artistic and architectural garments. Here, however, wholesale industrial machine production is distinctly at fault, even if in the quality of its food stuffs and bare necessities it has been blameless. In making art a commodity, or in the endeavour to make it so, its distinctive virtue and value has been left out of account. In associating it with purely mechanical and subdivided toil, in handing it over to the blind fingers of insensate machinery, or in setting before it a purely commercial object, both its spiritual and sensuous delight vanishes, and the refining and educating influence of both its practice and its ultimate appeal is lost. The human interest being reduced to a minimum, or made to depend solely on impulse of the pictorial sketcher or designer in no sort of relation

to the man, or the process by which his work is to be reproduced, is apt to lose itself in the desire for mere novelty or trick, to become the art of the newspaper, which rests its claims to attention on its impartial, partial, or partisan record of passing events and news—nothing if not new. Thus, both the beauty and the dignity of art are endangered, while the reduction of handicraft to mechanism takes their personal interest and individuality away.

The idea of producing art wholesale by steam-power is certainly an extraordinary one. It is very much like printing a misquoted line from a poet, repeating it page after page, and calling the result a book.

As I have already said, our mechanical invention, directed to the cheapening of the processes of industrial production, and the acceleration in speed of that production, has outstripped our artistic invention. In our efforts to increase the means of production we have lost sight of the end. In purely artistic production the old methods, the old tools, mostly remain, as they have done for centuries, unaffected by mechanical invention, for the simple reason that nothing can supersede the hand. The tools of the sculptor, the carver, the painter, are but extra fingers supplementary to the original four and the indispensable thumb, to which the artist continually recurs, and with which his work is begun and ended. That personal touch and impress of character we value so highly in what we call the Fine Arts, with the disappearance of the handicraftsman and the severance of designer and workman, has practically ceased to exist; except in those instances of individual revival and pursuit of a craft on its original lines, which, among the cultured and the leisured, or

on the part of painters or sculptors as a diversion, have increased so much of late years.

The modern conditions of manufacture appear to have destroyed the old traditions of the handicrafts. Our commerce has vulgarised and confused the public taste. Yet where any form of art is concerned—anything in the nature of a pattern or design in the material of surface decoration in any form, appealing to the eye, in the goods produced—manufacture is absolutely dependent on design of some sort. It may be begged, borrowed, paid for, or stolen, but still the design must be there to start with. Yet design, so far as it is under the influence of the existing conditions, has become tamer and tamer, and more and more meaningless and superficial; and it is obvious that the ill effects of a bad design are increased a thousandfold, or exactly in proportion to the increase in the mechanical power and speed of its production by the resources of machinery.

When the power of reproduction is so enormous, it becomes, obviously, more than ever necessary to reproduce nothing in design but what is sound and good in its own way. If not, far better confine ourselves to the manufacture of plain materials: good cloth, well woven and dyed, without pattern; serviceable furniture, without carving or painting, unless it can be sincere and thoughtful; useful pottery, as good in contour as the wheel and the skill of the thrower can make it, unspoiled by the ravings of the china painter distracted by centuries of false taste, or confused by dictionaries of ornament, or the impressionism of the modern Japanese or Parisian.

There are, of course, certain great industries which are

absolutely dependent on the surface designer and pattern maker, such as cotton-printing, carpet-weaving, paper-staining, for instance—manufactures which would not exist at all without a constant supply of designs. There is no doubt that this is fully recognised by the manufacturers or their managers; and the utmost pains, consistent with a due regard for the possibilities of profit, are taken by the leading firms to secure at least competent working drawings, if not tasteful designs. It may be conceded, too, that, as regards design, these industries have been the first to show the influence of those ideas which have produced a kind of revolution among designers of late years, with the result that a movement which appears to be purely English in origin has made its mark in these directions, and has largely counteracted the stream of tendency which at one time set so strongly towards Paris as the head centre of taste in all matters of art, the disastrous effects of which still affect us in many ways.

The real secret of Continental influence in design upon us is no doubt to be found in the fact that the severance of the arts and handicrafts has never been anything like so complete in other European countries as in industrial England. Our great industrial rival America shows the same want of originating power in artistic design, the same tendency in a more marked degree to avail herself of Parisian modes in art. However degraded the taste of the designer, or debased in type the design, the Frenchman or the Italian designer remained thoroughly in touch with the craftsman, and understood the technical conditions of the work thoroughly, so that his working drawings would be perfectly adapted to the method of manufacture. We have here, at any

rate, one reason why our manufacturers have given preference to French designs, and have been so much in the habit of crossing the water for new supplies. Yet we must recognise that so closely connected are now all countries, commercial and industrial, that the slightest change in one will surely affect the other. If foreign artists and workmen are in demand, our own suffer, or if our native talent is preferred, then our Continental brothers are worse off. This, of course, is the result of competition. Level up all round with technical education. Competition would come in again. You would get a technically educated proletariat, but no more secure of a livelihood than they are at present. Supposing England temporarily regained her commercial ascendency, the suffering would only be transferred from one country to another; and can we morally justify it to ourselves that people of one nationality have more right to live than those of another? These are awkward questions. But to return.

The term "artist" in this country has come to mean the pictorial artist only. Our art education has been dominated by the ideas and methods of the pictorial artist, and nearly everything has been sacrificed to the naturalistic, imitative, pictorial principles of representation, which, of whatever value they may be to the painter of easel pictures, or the popular illustration of newspapers, have but remote bearing on applied design. Fortune, fame, and favour have been open to the painter of pictures almost exclusively, and our art school training has been sedulously directed to the manufacture of painters as distinct from designers and craftsmen.

It is remarkable that during this century the artistic and

industrial characteristics of which I have been endeavouring to describe, we should have been under the shadow of a Royal Academy of Arts—a chartered and privileged body, presumably established to foster the arts of the country, but which, while it nominally includes architecture, sculpture, and engraving, and recognises their existence to a certain limited extent, as an institution really exists for the painter, and as far as the weight of its influence goes, almost exclusively encourages one form of art production, that of easel and marketable pictures—not only indirectly by the training of its schools, but by the far wider and more popular influence of its annual exhibitions, and those it controls throughout the country ; but so far as the applied arts and decorative designs are concerned, or are dependent upon academic recognition, they might scarcely exist at all.

Not that I think academies or academic influences are at all desirable or beneficial in their effects upon art or artists. Academic influence tends to crystallise both men and ideas. An academy, of course, can never originate, it can only recognise ; and is apt to be exceedingly slow at that. Every new, vigorous, and characteristic movement in art has grown up outside, and in opposition to its teaching and influence ; and as each independent school becomes prominent and influential, its leaders, unable as a rule to resist the substantial worldly advantages which academic distinction and titles bestow, become absorbed, and help to increase the weight of academic power, and become part of that crystallising influence against which every original mind has to struggle. It is not surprising ; I merely note the fact that it is so. I have no personal feeling in the matter. The Academy

includes many distinguished artists—men whose acquaintanceship I am proud to claim, but I fail to see that being Academicians makes them better artists; it does not prevent me feeling that the Academy exists for painters rather than painting, as to which I venture to think it has only succeeded practically in encouraging one form of that art, and that not the highest. It offers prestige and position to individual artists who have already won a position, and produces a keen competition among the candidates for its honour, but once inside its charmed circle a man seems, as a rule, inclined to rest on his laurels, or to eat the lotus. At the same time I desire freely to acknowledge at least the verbal recognition that has been extended to the arts and crafts of design, and the claim of those who work in them to the title of artists, to which my accomplished friend Sir Frederick Leighton gave expression in his eloquent address at the opening of the Art Congress at Liverpool.

It may seem I have been saying hard things of the Royal Academy. Well, here is a splendid opportunity of proving the reality of its new grand enthusiasm for the arts and crafts. Why not lend the noble galleries at Burlington House to the Society I represent, in the Exhibition of Arts and Crafts? I throw out this as a suggestion.

There is another institution which was established for the express purpose of dealing with the arts of design—I mean the National Art Training Schools of the country in connection with the Science and Art Department at South Kensington; with which I may say I have a kind of connection as one of the examiners in design.

The primary and excellent object of these schools was to afford a general artistic training to a craftsman, to the end that he might cultivate his artistic capacities in draughtsmanship and design, and apply them to the improvement of his own particular craft, under the stimulus of prizes for proficiency in various studies by means of a national competition every year.

But here, again, owing to the domination of the pictorial ideas and pictorial aims and methods in art, and their paramount influence in teaching, it has been found that students who develop pictorial skill and draughtsmanship, so far from endeavouring, or being able, to carry such skill back into their own craft or industry, aspire—as indeed under the circumstances is not surprising—to be painters of easel pictures, and follow the popular art with all its possibilities of personal distinction and fortune.

I say it is not surprising, for, even if the kind of training obtainable in these schools was in all cases, as it is in some, of such a nature that it could be made of real practical value in its bearing on particular handicrafts and industries, what strong inducements are there for a student working in any industry to remain in that industry, applying his school acquirements to it, when he has no prospect of gaining either personal credit or distinction for his work as an individual, or even substantial reward beyond a certain point within the margin of profit in that trade, a limit which, in proportion as the number of skilled workers increased, would necessarily tend to diminish by the competition among themselves?

I think this shows that existing economic conditions are dead against the aim of the schools. There are, of course, many

schools of high proficiency as such, and as examples of good working models, under the South Kensington system. I am not, however, personally able to feel much more enthusiasm for schools of art, as such, however efficient according to the official standards, than I am for academies, because I believe that the only training worth having in the arts must be in the workshop, as of old; since I hold that the true root and basis of all art lies in the handicrafts, and that artistic impulse and invention weakens as it loses its close connection and intimate relationship with them.

The weakness, too, of art schools is that, though an energetic master with ideas may, by dint of untiring zeal, build up his school to a certain high standard of proficiency, with the immediate object of passing as many students in the various grades as he can, under the system of payment by results, the students are apt under such a system to depend upon the qualities of their teacher—the distinction of the school as such collapses without him, and the personal individual element, owing to the student being rather subordinated to particular courses and methods of study, and the cultivation generally of a particular style, is not worth, or does not seem to leave, such permanent or desirable results as might be expected.

Of course it is true that the great increase in the ranks of picture painters of late years has had the usual effect under competition of lowering prices and diminishing sales; and also of making the struggle for distinction harder, since the standard of mediocrity is raised. In fact, the market is overstocked, and though, unlike the labourer who supports him, the painter can generally employ himself, his work remains unsold. With his

purely pictorial training, he, as a rule, has no idea of applying his art in any way to any form of industry. There are plenty of clever sketchers from nature, who, when they come to making a design for any special purpose or for execution in some particular material, are quite at sea; and even if they were ever so able, I am afraid that the market for art and industry combined is as yet but limited.

The craftsman himself, as we have seen, has been wellnigh extinguished by the development of that machine industry, which, while it has isolated the pictorial artists as a class, has also brought them to their present state. So that there are abundant reasons why art, as applied to industry, should not be in a flourishing and vigorous condition.

It is not surprising, bearing these thoughts in mind, that design has come to be regarded as a sort of Cinderella of art; her fine sisters, bedecked in paint and public favour, go to the ball and leave her to mind the hearth or the workshop. But she is not without her fairy godmother—Inventive Adaptation—who comes to her aid; and though it is hoped she will never lose her domestic qualities and substantial household virtues, she may yet win her share of applause, and, wearing the shoe of good luck, be recognised as the true bride of the prince Imagination.

At the preliminary meeting for the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Art, I took occasion to say that, "We must turn our artists into craftsmen, and our craftsmen into artists." That is the problem before us in this matter of art and industry.

I do not pretend to have found a cut-and-dried solution, but

there is one first necessary step to be taken, it seems to me, as a matter of common honesty, if we are really sincere in our desire to unite art and industry, and it is this: that the workman should have the credit of the work of his own head and hands, whether designer or craftsman. We must no longer be content with the vague, however convenient, designation of authorship, or rather proprietorship—So-and-So & Co.—now commonly affixed to works of art or industry in our exhibitions; but we should require the actual names of the contrivers and craftsmen whose actual labour, thought, and experience produced what we see.

Make a man responsible, and give him the credit of his own skill in his work: his self-respect at once increases, and he is stimulated to do his best; he will take pride and pleasure in his work; it becomes personal and therefore interesting.

I am associated with a movement in London—in which I have had the advantage of the co-operation and sympathy of many able and distinguished men in the arts—the immediate outcome of which has been an Exhibition of the Arts and Crafts with the object of ascertaining to some degree not only our artistic condition in the applied arts, and the amount of genuine public interest in them, as distinct from picture-painting, but also of giving the names of the responsible designers and executants of the works exhibited, as far as possible. We do not pretend, in the face of various difficulties inseparable from an initial movement, that our exhibition was all that we should have liked to make it, but the success which has attended it has been quite beyond our expectations, and the amount of public interest and support we have received and

the general recognition of the justness of the principle have been most encouraging—so much so that we held a second exhibition on the same lines in the autumn of 1889.

There is no reason why the movement should not be taken up independently and locally in other towns, on the same principles, managed by local committees, and supported by local sympathisers. Such exhibitions might afford valuable tests of the state of the arts and crafts generally, and, in particular, of the condition of design in the special industries of the district; while the association of the name of the actual designer and workman with their work would tend to bring out in emulation individual skill and invention under the stimulus of public recognition.

Another suggestion—in which I have been anticipated—I venture to make is that in every manufacturing town a permanent collection should be formed of the best procurable examples of design and artistic workmanship in different materials, especially with reference to the particular industries of the place or district. Designs and working drawings, together with the finished product, might be arranged side by side, and so constantly to be seen and studied and compared by designers and workmen. Such collections might comprise both old and new work; and specimens might be acquired from time to time from the annual or occasional arts and crafts exhibitions, such as those suggested.

The formation of guilds of artists and craftsmen for the study and discussion and illustration of the arts and crafts, and all questions concerning their interests, and those of workers in them, would also be found a very useful and interesting way of keeping designers and craftsmen in touch with one another, and

preserving that unity and solidarity in art which is so essential to its vitality.

This idea has already been adopted in Liverpool, and the "Liverpool Art Workers' Guild" also held an exhibition of applied art a year or two ago, which I understand was very successful, though I had not the pleasure of seeing it.

These, then, are some of the immediately practical ways of working towards a healthier condition of things in the arts.

Discussion and counsel must come before action. Hereafter we may be able to meet and gauge our progress. In the meantime I think it is most important to recognise certain facts—to know exactly how and where we stand in this matter of art and industry; which, moreover, cannot be separated from the great economic question of which, indeed, it is but a part.

Do not let us deceive ourselves, or expect to gather the grapes of artistic or industrial prosperity from economic thorns, or æsthetic figs from commercial thistles.

It is idle to expect artistic sense and refinement to spring from dull and sordid surroundings, or a keen sense of beauty amid the conditions of monotonous and mechanical toil. Unless your artist and craftsman has personal freedom, leisure and cultivation, and continued access to the beauty of both art and nature, you will get neither vigorous design nor good craftsmanship.

Let us look the Sphinx fairly in the face, and take the length of her claws and wings before we offer our solution of the riddle. It may be that the problem will solve itself in the course of time, as part of that great and constant movement of evolution in which we ourselves and our lives and interests are involved;

which no man can do much either to impede or to accelerate, though the action of the least of us counts in the total sum—since it is the slow but sure result of causes at work through the long progress of centuries, bound up with the laws of nature, and the course of human destiny itself.

THE END

Printed by R. & R. Clark, *Edinburgh*